THE TEMPLES OF RAJASTHAN

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By

H. BHISHAM PAL

PRAKASH PUBLISHERS
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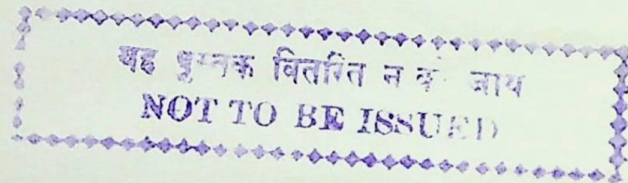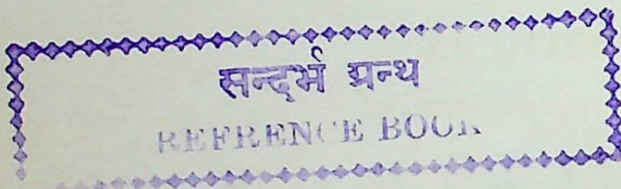
dedicated

TO THE MEMORY OF

THE BRAVE BROTHERS

who laid down lives in the defence of

MOTHER INDIA AND HER CULTURE

FOREWORD

"But for a few scattered areas on which stand important State capitals like Jaipur and Udaipur, Rajasthan is an arid desert. Its people are noted for their courage, patriotism and spirit of self-sacrifice but, on the whole, due to its climatic conditions this large area has not been able to make any important impact on the political history and culture of India. It possesses two temples of all India importance; the Vaishnava Sri Srinath Ji temple in Udaipur and the Dilwara Jain temple on Mount Abu and a few important forts, the most prominent of these being Chitore. As a result of contact with the Mughals, Rajasthan developed a school of painting which has made some notable contributions to Indian Art". This, roughly speaking, would have summed up the idea which the average well-informed Indian had formed about Rajasthan about twenty years ago and the idea would have been wrong, to a very large extent, even then. Researches in recent times have exposed its falsity to a still greater extent.

The tribute paid to the character of the people is perfectly true but the rest of the above description needs to be considerably modified. Rajasthan, for instance, developed not one but several schools of painting which were certainly influenced to some extent by Mughal Art but Rajput art by itself has a long history. It influenced Mughal Art also to a considerable extent. Geographically, Rajasthan stands at a point where a number of high roads, traversed by various tribes and racial groups in the past, cross each other. Each of these had more or less its specific culture. These cultural strains met and influenced one another considerably and Rajasthan had a considerable hand in the evolution of that common culture which is today such an important part of our national life. Researches are every day bringing to light evidences of how the culture associated with the names of Harappa and Mohinjodaro and what is called Aryan culture met and reacted upon each other in this part of the country. The various Rajput clans, as they passed across Rajasthan, Malwa and Gujarat in their efforts to establish powerful kingdoms, developed local artistic traditions particularly in the field of architecture and sculpture. Religion has always been a great source of inspiration in India and Jainism, Shivism and Vaishnavism have all left behind important buildings as monuments of the sway which they once held over the minds of the people and their rulers. Rajasthan is, therefore, full of material for study for the archaeologist and the historian of Art and Religion.

The present book has collected example of one important class of buildings in Rajasthan, namely temples. The reproductions speak for themselves. They are works of beauty and at the same time have about them an aura of that religious fervour which inspired notonly those who provided the necessary funds but the craftsmen who built them. The poet has said, "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever". The charm of these great buildings is eternal. It reveals new facets

to the discerning eye at every step. Many of these are not known to people outside. Sandstone and marble are found in abundance in this area and the delicate fingers of the craftsman have created out of them marvellous forms expressive of a hundred nuances of feeling whose beauty baffles description.

I need not say more to commend this collection. It would bring home to every one, I hope, some thing of the grandeur of Rajasthani Art and of that sense of beauty that was such an important part of the spiritual life of the people of Rajasthan. The sympathetic tourist from abroad will also find in this book a very valuable guide. He will know now where to turn in his search for monuments of the inner life of the people of Rajasthan. The association of Religion and utter disregard of death is itself an interesting chapter in human psychology. Truly, those who know how to die can alone glimpse something of that Reality which is behind the veil cast by our every day life and gives it meaning.

SAMPURNANAND

PREFACE

Not only in India but in the world, Rajasthan has its own distinguished place. Its past had been most glorious. The land of Rajasthan which is the symbol of chivalry and glory is also matchless in the grandeur of art and architecture. Second to none in warfare, the rulers and people of Rajasthan also constructed the most beautiful temples, which not only added to their glamour, but to the records of their deeds and religious fervour, which will be cherished till eternity.

The impact of Hindu, Buddhist and Mughal architecture is clearly visible in the temples of Rajasthan—big and small, which number no less than five thousand. These temples were not only for ventilating the religious desires of the people but for spiritual content and unity. The war slogans had always the blessings of some God and Goddess, dominating the particular section and sector. Defaced and mutilated figures in these shrines also tell a pathetic tale of barbarity of the religious iconoclasts.

Since my student days I had been fascinated with the charm of exuberance and splendour in the architecture of the temples, which leads me today to fulfill a cherished ambition of my life. The artistic skill and majesty of the shrines of Delwada, Ranakpur, Badoli and Jaisalmer have rare rivals in the field of temple-architecture in the world. For the last six years I have been visiting these temples and collecting material to put on paper the story of the temples of Rajasthan, which, I believe, is the first of its kind.

PAL HOUSE
KOTA-2.

H. BHISHAM PAL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful to Dr. Sampurnanand, former Governor of Rajasthan, for his kind interest in the publication of this work and writing a foreword for it.

I am specially indebted to Mr. R. S. Bhatt, Director of Public Relations, Rajasthan, for continuous encouragement and valuable guidance in this venture. Mr. and Mrs. N.G. Jog were good enough to go through the manuscript and Dr. Satya Prakash, Director of Archaeology and Museums, Rajasthan, offered me some valuable suggestions.

My sincere thanks are also due to the Managers and the Priests of the temples, I visited.

I am also thankful to my friend and colleague, Mr. N.K. Pareek for providing me with valuable material on various temples of Jaipur, and Mr. K.M. Purohit for helping in preparing the plates.

My thanks are also to Shri T.K. Sengupta of Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. and Shri Prem Chand Bakliwal of Prakash Publishers for taking special pains for printing and bringing out this book.

Last but not the least, I thank my wife, Saroj, M.A. for her help at every step in the writing and production of this book.

H.B. PAL

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

ACCORDING to Col. James Todd, "Rajasthan exhibits the sole example in the history of mankind of a people withstanding every outrage barbarity can inflict, or human nature sustain, from a foe whose religion commands annihilation, and bent to the earth, yet rising buoyant from the pressure and making calamity a whetstone to courage. How did the Britons atonce sink under the Romans, and in vain strive to save their groves and their druids, or the altars of Bal from destruction. To the Saxons they alike succumbed, they again to the Danes; and this heterogeneous breed to the Normans. Empire was lost and gained by a single battle, and the laws and religion of the conquered merged in those of the conquered. Contrast with these the Rajpoots; not an iota of their religion or customs have they lost, though many a foot of land."

Archaeologists trace back the history of this land of chivalry and glory to the early stone age, the area being called by different names at different times. The existence of a

lively culture is revealed by the excavations at Bairath in Jaipur, Bangadh in Alwar and Rangmahal in Bikaner. No wonder, the deserts of Jodhpur, Jaisalmer and Bikaner have many settlements of the Mohinjodaro and Harappa civilisation beneath their gold coloured warm sands. Recently excavators at Ahar, a village three miles from Udaipur, have brought to light the existence of a culture akin with the Indus Valley civilization. During the Mahabharata period, Bikaner which was called Jangal Pradesh in those days, was a part of the Kaurava Kingdom and Viratapuri, now Bairath, formed part of the domain of the King Virat of Matsya. With the proclamation of sovereign kingdom by Pandavas, Nakul conquered the areas of Marubhumi and Madhyamika and Sahdev subdued the Matsya and the areas of Avanti, bringing the whole of Rajasthan under their suzerainty.

The second stage in the history of Rajasthan, according to available records, emerges with the invasion of Alexander, when various tribes of Punjab took shelter and made this land their permanent abode. Sivis established their janpadā in Mewar and Marwar in south-eastern Rajasthan. The discovery of two edicts of Ashoka confirm Maurya dominance in this land which lasted over in some places of Mewar and Marwar till the 8th Century. With the departure of the Greeks, the Shakas, the Huns and the Kushans tried successively to establish their empire here. The Kushans reached right up to Rajasthan and ruled for about half a century followed by the Shakas, the worshippers of Siva up to the end of the fourth century. With the conversion of Kaniska to Buddhism, the art and culture of Rajasthan also did not escape the impact.

The golden period of the imperial Guptas was a remarkable epoch in the history of the great warrior king, Samudra Gupta, who subdued the eastern sector of Rajasthan, and it

was under his son, Chandra Gupta Vikramaditya that the whole of Rajasthan was brought under the sway of the Guptas, which continued till the end of the fifth century, when the Huns arrived. The credit for subjugating the Aryan republics, though temporarily, goes to the famous Hun, Meherkula. The high hand of Yashodharman created a confused situation in the country which gave vent to the desires of ambitious chieftains to build their own republics. Thus the Maurayas in Chittor, Guhillas in Mewar and Châvadās in western Rajasthan established their republics.

The period between 4th and 8th Century, a tumultuous one, produced many a monuments of architectural splendour. The patronage of the imperial Guptas and latter kings and the artistic skill of the masons produced exquisite works of temple architecture, unparalleled in the contemporary world. The temples of Badoli and Menal and the Siva temples of Udaipur are outstanding examples, which speak even today of the majesty and grandeur of that age.

Internal feuds and sensitivity to casteism created an imbalance on the political and social plane. The absence of a strong central leadership and quarrels of the petty rulers necessitated the arrival of a new force. It was in this period of flux when society was trying desperately to adjust itself to novel and puzzling situations that a number of new tribal families emerged as leaders. They were later known by the generic term Rajput and the region, which eventually passed into their hands, was known as Rajputana. The rise of the Rajputs opened a new and exciting chapter in the history of of the region, known now as Rajasthan.

The eclipse of Harshavardhan era saw the new force in the powerful Pratihara ruler Nagabhatta, who swayed the land from Kanauj to Matsya and Bang to Andhra. The Arabs dared not encroach on any territory of Sindh and Multan

as long as he stayed in the saddle. But after two hundred years, in the year 1018 A.D., Mahmud Ghazni crossed this land of Marwar and attacked the temple of Somnath. The stories of barbarity, vandalism and marauding of the artistic sculptural pieces are still told by the defaced and disfigured idols by that iconoclast. The Indian ruler was a silent and passive spectator to this ravageous enactment of drama for want of strength and unity.

The period from the 8th century to the 12th century was a period of great social awakening and religious fervour among the people. Budhism was uprooted and Jainism found its firm foundation in Rajasthan. By this time, the Chauhans were ruling the territory from Nagaur to Delhi with their capital at Ajmer. The central part of Marwar was ruled by the Parmars, south west Marwar by the Solankis and Chittor by the Guhilots. Prithviraj Chauhan emerged as the most powerful ruler, who resisted Mahmud Ghouri and even inflicted a defeat on him initially; but dynastic feuds rivalry and enemity with his father-in-law, Raja Jaichand, were enough causes to bring about the fall of the Rajput power in the second invasion in 1193 A.D. With his departure, the influence of Rajputs on the national scene diminished and small principalities emerged and tried to consolidate themselves. The Muslim king Alauddin Khilji, once again, ravaged the territory of Rajasthan and brought about misery and humiliation to its people; depredation and plunder to her temples and other valuable monuments.

The Sisodias of Mewar emerged strong after the death of Alauddin Khilji. Maharana Kumbha (1433-1468) was a great warrior and a patron of art and music. At his instance were constructed many temples, of which the Chittorgarh shrines are of great celebrity. Maharana Sanga brought the Rajput rulers under one banner and fought against Babur at

Kanwah in 1527 A.D., but as chance would have it, his rout resulted in the decline of the Rajput power.

The picture of consolidation of different territories by different clans emerged more clearly now. The Bhatis in Jaisalmer, the Rathors in Marwar and Bikaner, the Guhilots in south-east of the Aravallis, the Chauhans in Bundi-Sirohi and the Kachawas in Jaipur established themselves firmly. A new relationship of matrimonial alliance between Muslims and Rajputs and the adoption of liberal policy towards Hindus by the great Mughal Akbar, brought tranquility in most parts of Rajasthan with the exception of Mewar under Rana Pratap. With immense and indomitable courage, Rana Pratap resisted the Muslim aggression and held out against heavy odds. The War of Haldighati, no less renowned than that of Thermopyle was a remarkable example of sacrifice for ideals. He had to lead a nomadic life to vindicate his love of freedom for while his other contemporary Rajputs opted for a life of luxury, under Mughul suzerainty. Though defeated, Maldeva in Marwar also harassed the armies of Shershah. Akbar appointed a subedar with headquarters at Ajmer to control the areas of Rajasthan and with this began, the story of integration. This period, till Aurangzeb sat on the Mughul throne, was a period of religious and social awakening in Rajasthan, where many new shrines were constructed and old ones renovated. The architectural style of Rajasthan was vividly depicted in the Mughal buildings constructed at Delhi, Agra and Fatehpur Sikri, etc. This two-way traffic of 'give and take' brought new harmony in Mughal and Rajput architecture. The secular architecture of Rajasthan, having the impact of Muslim design brought new laurels and impressive look to its structures.

After sustaining the brunt of the Muslim rulers, the ever-weakening Rajput principalities also became the target of Maratha onslaughts. By this time the British had also swayed

the major parts of India, giving terrible blows to the Marathas. Ultimately in the nineteenth century, the Rajput rulers accepted the sovereignty of the British and lost their independent identity.

Free from external aggression, the Rajput rulers, now paid attention to the building of the capital towns bereft of western influence. The 1857 War of Independence was not a significant event, so far as Rajasthan was concerned, for most of the rulers had already taken to a life of ease and luxury under "pax Britannica".

The declaration of the independence of India on the 15th August, 1947, provided three alternatives for the states i.e., to opt for merger in the Indian Union or to join Pakistan or to stay independent. The sagacious diplomacy of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, patriotism of the rulers and national awakening in the masses of all the large and small states enabled them to join the Indian Union. Rajasthan was integrated into one unit after passing through few stages. The states of Alwar, Dholpur, Karauli and Bharatpur merged to form the Matsya Union on the 17th March, 1948, while Kota, Bundi, Udaipur, Tonk, Jhalawar, Partapgarh, Dungarpur, Banswara, Kishangarh, Shahpura and Kushalgarh were integrated in the former Rajasthan on 25th March, 1948. Ultimately, the remaining states of Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer united to form Rajasthan, as it is to-day, on the 30th March, 1949. Matsya also joined in the same year. With the reorganisation of states in India in 1956, Ajmer and Abu were also amalgamated in this state, making Rajasthan a fullfledged and compact unit.

The religious urge in Hindus and Jains never waned despite harassment during Muslim suzerainty over India. The British neither harassed nor encouraged their religious preachings. Temple of Madho Behari in Jaipur, constructed

about forty years ago, gave a vent to the peoples' desires and faith in their Supreme Lord. Temple of Sharda at Pilani is another land-mark in interpreting the position of this institution in men's life. By installing the images of religious lords, intellectuals and thinkers, it gave a cosmopolitan look and also a sense of world's brother-hood. The Birla family is playing a significant role in constructing and renovating the temples throughout India. Jains also did not lag behind and their recent construction of the temples at Sanganer, Padampura, Chuligiri and other places exhibit their enthusiasm and urge for propagation of their faith.

In spite of all the difficulties and humiliations meted out at the hands of invaders and bigots, the religious feeling has persisted with vigour and enthusiasm. Iconoclasm could not shake the faith and will of the worshippers. New shrines depicting the past glory and art are being constructed. Man dies but religion and its monuments remain.

CHITTORGARH

THE acquisition of power has always been an instinctive craving and it has ever been the same for religion, and from times immemorial, desire for both has gone together side by side in an equal measure. Power becomes a mere record in books in course of time, but the religious fervour remains evident in structural forms of temples, dedicated to the deity worshipped by men of power and which stand as an eloquent expression of it. Chittorgarh is an eloquent example of this fervour being the place of the gallant Ranas who embodied the Hindu chivalry of the time. The pyres of Padmini remind one of the greatest sacrifice in history preferred to dishonour at the hands of enemies. Mirabai renounced all the comforts of imperial palaces for her devotion to Lord Krishna and Pannadai offered her own son for slaughter to save the life of the son of her royal master.

The achievements of the Ranas are recorded in scripts but their religious devotion is evidenced by the monuments,

they constructed in the shape of temples from time to time. These temples are feats of architecture varying in size and designs prevalent in their respective times. They can be assigned to different phases from the 8th to the 17th century A.D.

The first phase starts with the huge and massive temples of Kalika Mata and Kumbha Shyamji, the earliest belonging to the Ranas. The splendour in profuse and brilliance in mass of the later Gupta temple architecture is as alive in the temples as elsewhere though, thrice they suffered tremendous vandalism at the hands of the sackers of the fort.

Kalika Mata Temple

The Kalika Mata Temple is situated on a high ground at the eastern brim of the fort—a very picturesque view. Its construction dates to the 8th century. Originally, it was dedicated to Surya (Sun god), but later on converted to Shakti (Power goddess) temple. The original Surya image in sitting position on a running chariot of seven horses driven by Ashwani, is still surmounting the panel above the lintel stone of the main entrance to the garbha graha or womb house. Surya is attended in the left and right by Siva and Vishnu, accompanied by Indra. But the original image of the diety is no more in the shrine. This is a Chalukyan style temple with a porch, huge sabha mandapa and spacious garba griha. The sabha mandapa or pillared hall is capped by the dome supported on a massive monolith and finely carved lime stone pillars, having very exquisite pot and foliage patterns of the later Gupta decorative works. The Surya image also figures prominently in the four niches in the sanctum wall besides others of his time. The ceiling of the sabha mandapa is divided into various mythological episodes. The central bay contains the image of Mahishasur-Mardani in her sacred commission of killing Mahishasur. The whole

temple is in sound condition but unfortunately, the original shikhara or steeple is lost and the present one is only an innovation and plastered without any decorative work.

Kumbha-Shyamji Temple

Kumba Shyamji Temple is also as large as the temple of Kalika Mata and commands a similar position near the ancient palace. The sculptural details, available in the plinth facade of this temple resemble to that of the Kalika Mata temple. At present it is dedicated to Lord Vishnu, but the prominence of Shakti images in it, particularly in the plinth, which is a part of the original construction makes us believe that this cannot be a Vaishnavite temple, by origin. Like Kalika Mata temple this is also definitely a converted temple. The contrast between the sculptural art existing on the base and at the roof level are remarkable evidence of its different dates of construction. The original sculptures in the base have natural suppleness of great taste in its natural profile while the sculptures in the upper region are the products of a much-less-skilled hand. They are very crude in finish, unmethodical in proportion and without expression. These later figures are additions or replacements as a consequence of subsequent renovations carried out by Maharana Kumbha in the mid 15th century.

It is doubtful if Maharana Kumbha, who was not only a great king, administrator, warrior, politician, poet, but also a great architect with high aesthetic taste, could have allowed such a crude representation of carvings and sculptures.

The second phase consists of the fine temples of Samidheshwar and Kukabeshwar Mahadeva, belonging to 11th to 12th century A.D. In this phase, not only the design and massiveness of temples was reduced, but the stone art also

received a great setback, though its enormousness continued. The representation of sculptures in these temples is an imitation of Khajuraho type, but it lacks in expression and proportion of body. The unproportionate chiselling in limbs and prominent rise in the chest and facial features show that by this time mastery over chisel had deteriorated in Chittor, though it was still at its peak around Mewar, *e.g.*, Delwada at Abu and Badoli near Kota. According to historical records this period was comparatively more peaceful for Chittor and consequently it had enjoyed great prosperity. But surprisingly, there is no expression there of, in these two monuments of that period.

The third phase of Chittor temples ranges from the 14th to the 16th century A.D.. It is during these three centuries that Chittor received the first impact of the mediaeval history of India. The beginning of the 14th century cast doom over Chittor with the sack by Alauddin Khilji. The later period of 14th and 15th century revived Rajput glory during the reign of Rana Kumbha and his immediate successors. Again in the 16th century, though it was lost in the battles with the mighty empire of Akbar, Chittor is still remembered with pride and regarded as a symbol of nationalism. But, however, it seems that after its revival, a great number of temples and other monumental buildings were constructed or renovated. A majority of the existing temples dates to this period. Shringar Chauri, Satbis Deori, Digamber Jain Temples and Tower of Victory, etc. are better monuments throwing light on the temple-architect of this era. But as much more as they are in number and styles, so much less they are in quality of sculptural art. The sculptures of this period are unproportionate in size, crudely finished and expressionless and decorated by heavy and excessive ornaments of low-class tastes. But mythologically, this phase is of importance in so far as it indicates the pathetic fall in the taste of sculptural and decorative stone work and a consider-

able change in the architecture itself. Hitherto most common way of decorating pillars of the temples lost its existence in preference to unmethodical and crude carvings in place of earlier fine and delicate patterns of pot and foliage. Similarly, the traditional profusely carved ceilings of the mandapas become plain. A great change in the structural architecture also came into being by giving a steeper oval shape to the ceiling of mandapas which seems to be the results of the influence of the Mughul architecture. The original shikhara pattern of dome also lost preference as mostly all the mandapas are topped by Mughul-type domes having lime plaster as erected coverage. Similarly, in the case of the main shikhara also, though the ancient method was followed, we find a total change in its decorative features. Either the stones are plain or with few and simple carvings without following, any continuity in their design. Not only this, in the temples belonging to the latter period of this phase, we find that a cheap material like brick was used in the construction of shikharas, giving place to carvings in lime mortar.

The much-later temples of 16th century A.D. indicate total disappearance of original architecture as this took the shape more or less of a modern structure having a small dome-shaped shikhara with or without mandapa. The adoption of cheap material design and unskilled labour is as the result of the unstable political and economic factors of the later days of the Ranas at Chittor and is indicative of the fact that the main patron of Chittor temples was the Rana family only. As long as their position was stable and strong, the temple architecture thrived to the highest and richest bloom and came to non-existence with their fall.

Now the Archaeological Department of the Government of India has taken over the responsibility of preserving these sacred shrines and a good amount of money is being spent in conserving them.

BADOLI

THE glorious achievements of the Hindu rulers are recorded in the books but their religious fervour sparkles and shall keep on sparkling by the monuments they constructed in the shape of temples from time to time. The temples of Badoli, situated about 30 miles from Kota and near the Rana Pratap Sagar Dam on the river Chambal have got stupendous and diversified architecture. The great labour mobilised in the construction exhibits the true beauty of the Hindu sculpture.

The grand temple of Badoli is dedicated to the Lord Siva, whose emblems are visible everywhere. The architectural age could only be judged by the antiquity of the temple. By a close study of the historical records, the construction can be dated back to 8th century. The temple is situated in an area of two hundred and fifty square yards. The main images are of Siva and Parvati along with their attendants. The high enclosure of the temple area is picturesque with grooves of old trees and many small fountains in

which sacred water flows. The images are artistically sculptured by the tasteful masonry and every part of it has been displayed in proportion and perfection. On the left, in advance of the main temple the Ashta Bhuji Mata or the eight-armed Mother Goddess is seen. This 30 foot image became the victim of the Muslim revenge and, thus, she is deprived of all her arms and head, save the one with which she grasps her shield. The Joginis and Apsaras of Rajput martial poetry have been spared by the generous enemies.

On the right side of the main temple is situated a shrine of Trimurti. The skill of the workmen seems to have excelled in the execution of these sculptures. Having been unattended to for a long time the heads of Brahma and Vishnu have been totally defaced. Beautifully carved, the serpents around the neck of Siva as they are, two horses couped from the shoulder and surmounted by death's head are visible in this shrine. According to a minute observer of the architecture, the relief is very bold and altogether the group is worthy of having casts made from it.

The main temple of Badoli which is fifty-eight feet in height, is wholly covered with mythological descriptions. The great God Mahadev, who gives and takes life, is everywhere emblematic. The body of the edifice in which is the sanctum of the God and over which has risen its sikhara, is a square of only twenty-one feet, but the addition of the domed mandapa and portico makes it forty-four by twenty-one. Mahadev fully armed with his offensive weapons is shown with his victims. Scattered on the right is the Jogini, drunk with blood and cup touching her lips and her countenance expressive of vacuity. On the west is a romantic Mahadev enticing the mountain nymph Mena to his embrace. It is finely ornamented with weapons of Mahadev and snakes hanging around his neck like a garland. Nandi and Shesanag are also masterly and perfectly shown. Bhukkimata or the

personification of famine dominated the northern compartment of the temple.

It is said that to commemorate the enamouration of The Ruler with a Rajput princess, resulted in raising such a magnificent building. The workmanship in the shikharas and other parts is so perfect and strong that it has stood all the tests of time and is still in good condition. Near this enclosure is a huge tank surrounded by shrines which though small, are artistically rich and depict some god or the other. All the shrines are dedicated to the inferior divinities. Some pieces of architecture carved in these shrines are splendidly beautiful. Like other Hindu temples, shringarchauri can also be seen here. Of about forty feet in-height, it is separated by a double range of columns on each face and covered with exquisite sculptures.

Looking to the massive and artistic construction of the various temples in Badoli makes us believe that in old times the art of temple architecture was at its pinnacle. The patronage of the rulers to the masons led them to put life into their art and thus enlivened the memories of those hands which marked the lasting impression in the hearts of the people. The temples of Badoli from all aspects are perfect. Their mandapas, shikharas, garbgrahas, columns and toranas, etc are richly ornamented and perfectly displayed. The temple with its natural surroundings and in the vicinity of Rana Pratap Sagar Dam is being turned into a beautiful tourist spot.

MENAL

THERE is a natural desire in human beings to perpetuate the memories of their existence in this world. The construction of the temples of Menal accorded with this feeling of the builder. Beautifully and artistically sculptured, the temples are situated about eighty miles from the famous fort of Chittorgarh and ten miles from Bijolia, the venue of the first satyagraha in the state. According to experts of archaeology, its construction date is thirteenth century which was recently confirmed by the finding of some images. Unlike the temples of Chittorgarh, these are situated on a low level surrounded by small hillocks and a tank on the west.

Menal was the capital of Hada Rajputs from where a large area of the present eastern Rajasthan was governed. The powerful ruler Prithviraj, a lover of art and architecture, is credited with the construction of these beautiful and profusely stone-carved temples which are symbols of skill and inspiration. Such a huge and magnificent building was made to please the queen, who had long standing

desire to have something unique in her husband's empire. It is said that on completion of the temple they were shown to her for admiration but instead, she disapproved and the result was the construction of another temple on south-western side over a hill. Fortunately the sculptures of this place remained intact for the simple reason that it was never been a victim of foreign invaders' revengeful actions.

The main temple of Lord Siva is situated on a low ground at the eastern brim of the river menal and presents a very picturesque view. Its construction is confirmed to be of 1253 A.D. by the discovery of a fullsize image recently. The original image of Lord Siva in sitting position is still surmounting the panel above the lintel stone of the main entrance to garbagraha. The sculptural details in the facade of this temple resemble south Indian temples specially available in the roof of sabha-mandapas and shikharas, etc. Depiction of some erotic figures also reflects on the trend of the age so far as the dissemination of knowledge pertaining to sex to the people was concerned.

The ceiling of the sabhamandapa divided into various bays is profusely carved and sculptured in high taste and depicts different mythological episodes. The whole temple is in a good condition and the minor repairs at the hands of the masons is keeping it in a decorative way. The representation of some sculptures in this temple is an imitation of Khajuraho type, but they lack in expression and proportion of body. The disproportionate measurements in limbs and prominent rise in the chest and facial feature show that masons had loosened their grip on their chisels. The main temple unlike other contemporary ones, is of shikhara type and stands on a square platform. On top of a second shikhara an embellished horse is visible which in old days indicated a sign of might, prosperity and pride. The outer walls are

profusely covered with sculptured images. In the garbgraha of main temple an image of a lady fondling a child with her hands reflects filial affection. At various places richly ornamental women, sculptured in different poses, indicate the carnel attitude of the rulers.

On the south side of the main temple lies a monastery which was used as a training centre for religious scholars. It is sixty by sixty feet, having two storeys in a rectangular form. The pillars in it are most artistically carved. The sun surrounded by serpents on them reflects the perfection and faith of the masons. The speciality of the surrounding of the temples is a water tank which seems from the outside like a temple having the same type of round building with sculptures and carvings on the outer walls. It has also got a drainage system. Just near the main temple are the groups of small temples having triple shrines.

Thus the temples of Menal have their own grace and grandeur. On having a glance at the natural surroundings and construction we have to believe that the masons of those times had mastery over their chisels and their skill was no less than that of any others.

UDAIPUR

THE name of Udaipur possesses a pride of place in the annals of India, for the brave Ranas of this place nursed the flower of chivalry with their blood and did not bow before the formidable Mughal empire. No other state offered more courageous and determined resistance to the Mughals than this one and it is only in view of this that the glory of Rajput chivalry is untarnished even today.

The land of Mewar is not only famous for its chivalry and traditional glory but also for its religious fervour. The temples of Nathdwara, Eklingji, Charbhuja, Nagda, Rishabdev and Kankroli are its symbols.

Shrinathji temple

Situated in a picturesque natural scenery created by the Arravalli Hills, this famous temple of Nathdwara, about 30 miles from Udaipur, has an important place in the history

of temples in India. Housing the main seat of the Vallabha Sect, it attracts lakhs of devotees every year.

The temple is famous for its immense wealth exhibited in the plethora of ornaments and distribution of "Prashad". It has wells for storing milk, ghee and other food materials which, it is said, are never emptied. The daily devotional service with all the rituals by the priests is enchanting. It starts with Mangal Bhog followed by Shrangar Gwal, Raj Bhog, evening Uthapan Bhog and lastly the "Shayan", which constitute the eight lovely glimpses of the Lord Krishna for the devotees. Thousands of devotees flock every day there to have Darshan of their Lord. This they call Jhankis.

From the architectural angle, this temple is very simple unlike other temples of Mewar. Made of brick and lime it has big halls, garbhagraha and varandaha in front of the idol Shrinathji which is made of black stone. Around these buildings are quarters for the priests and other staff of the temple.

Historical facts relate to the installation of the idol of Shrinathji on the invitation of Maharana Raj Singh in 1671 A.D., which was brought from Brijmandal with a view to avoiding destruction at the hands of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. A village named Ghasyar was also set apart for meeting the running expenditure in connection with the "Puja" of the Lord. The present temple was erected in due course and to the south, a town Nathdwara (the portal of the Lord) sprang up. According to the tradition, the chief of the Vallabh Sect and this temple has been a Goswami Tilkayat.

Eklingji temple

A small village, Eklingji situated in a narrow defile about 12 miles north of Udaipur, is the place where Bapa Rawal, a powerful Rajput prince in the 8th Century, said to be the founder of the Mewar dynasty, met a sage Harit with one "Lingam" by whose favour he is said to have captured Chittor. The temple erected by Bapa Rawal was destroyed by the Muslims but, according to an inscription dated 1467 A.D., it was rebuilt by Rana Raimal.

Architecturally, it is of unusual design, having a double storeyed porch and sanctuary with the former covered by a flat pyramidal roof, composed of many hundred circular knobs. Inside the temple is a four-faced image of Mahadev made of black marble. Some other elegant temples dedicated to Lord Vishnu and installed by Mirabai stand nearby. It is said that Ranas of Mewar had installed the idol of Eklingji and before embarking on any new venture, used to seek his blessings by personal appearance in the temple.

Adbhutnathji temple

One of the most ancient places in Mewar and quite close to Eklingji is Nagda which is said to have been founded in the 7th century by Nagaditya, an ancestor of Bapa Rawal. It is said to have been for some time the capital of Guhilots but is now in ruins. The Jain temple known as Adbhutnathji situated here, is remarkable for its giant sized images, the largest being that of Shantinath measuring $6\frac{1}{2}' \times 4'$ which was installed in 1494 A.D. The whole place accommodates as many as 52 temples. Beautifully arched and sculptured, it contains all the requisites of ancient temples like Shringar-chauri, sabha-mandapa and gumbaj, etc. The pictures of animals like lions and elephants is frequently sculptured to provide artistic decor.

The roofs of the temples are sculptured in different designs and various poses of dancing girls are shown. The artists have kept in view the perfection in the skill and art by chiselling the statues of man and woman proportionately. The pieces of art could not escape the cruelty of Aurangzeb. The defaced idols are a legacy of that age. A legendary tale prevalent is that the forces of Aurangzeb could not completely demolish the temple owing to the stinging of bees.

Sas-Bahu temple

More than a thousand years old, built on a plinth of eight feet in an area of about 100×100 sq. yards near Nagda, this temple, popularly called the temple of Sas-Bahu (Mother-in-Law and Daughter-in-Law) was built with the donations of a Vaishnava. The temple, dedicated to Vishnu, is in a dilapidated condition. Sabhamandapa of the temple is ornamentally decorated with poses of dancing girls. Many mithuna poses in relief found in the temple were essentially meant to educate the devotees. It also consisted in extending the aesthetic sensibility into spiritual perception.

Rishabdevji temple

Another historical and sacred place is Rishabdevji (or Dhulev), situated about 40 miles south of Udaipur and 10 miles to the north of Kherwara. This famous Jain temple devoted to the worship of Adinath or Rishabnath is annually visited by thousands of pilgrims from all parts of Rajasthan and Gujerat. It is difficult to determine the age of this temple but three inscriptions record deeds of piety and repairs in the 14th and the 15th century. The principal image is of black stone and is in a sitting position and about three feet in height. It is said to have been brought here

from Gujerat towards the end of the 13th century. Hindus as well as Jains worship the divinity, the former regard him as one of the 24 incarnations of the Lord Vishnu and the latter as one of the 24 Tirthankars or hierarchs of Jainism. The Bhils call him Kalaji on account of the colour of the image and have great faith in him. An oath by Kalaji is one of the most solemn that a Bhil of this religion can take.

Its another name is Kesariaji on account of the saffron (Kesar) with which the pilgrims besmear the idol. Every votary is entitled to wash off the paste applied by a previous worshipper and in this way saffron worth thousands of rupees is offered to the God annually. Regarding him as an incarnation of the Lord Vishnu, His Highness the Maharana Fateh Singh presented to the idol an Angi (an ornamental cloth for the decoration of the idol) studded with diamonds worth 2½ lakhs of rupees.

Jagdish Temple

Dominantly situated in the heart of the city of Udaipur, the temple of Jagdish was built by Maharana Jagat Singh I in the 17th century at a cost of about Rs. 15 lakhs. The temple, eighty feet high, is on a twenty five feet high platform accessible by a flight of thirty two steps. Various sculptures depicted in the walls of the temple are fine pieces of art. Various engraved figures reveal aspects of daily life. They have been captivating the attention of architects who have all praise for its bold structure.

Besides these main temples, there are several other temples which have stood the test of time and the faith of the people. The temple of Dwarka-Dheesh is situated on the embankment of the Rajasamand lake in Kankroli, which is 41 miles from Udaipur. On a hill to the north-east is a large

Jain temple, said to have been built by Dayal Shah, the Minister of Maharana Raj Singh. Its spire was partly destroyed by the Mahrathas and later replaced by a round tower.

About 60 miles from Udaipur is yet another famous temple of Charbhujanath, which attracts a large number of devotees. It is constructed on the style of temple architecture prevalent in the mediaeval age. Glass work in the inner temple imparts a beautiful look. The performence of the 'Puja' and management of affairs of the temple is entrusted to the Gujars. On Bhadra Shukla 11, a grand fair is held which is attended by thousands of worshippers from all parts of the country.

PUSHKAR

PUSHKAR is so called because it really refers to lotus which comes out of mud. Pushkar is called the Tirathraj or the king of the sacred places of Hindus. The Padma-purana gives a legend that Brahma, the creator of the world, was in search of a suitable place to perform a yagna. While he was roaming in this place a lotus fell from his hand and struck at three places and water came out. This sign determined the site for the yagna performance. These three places situated within a radius of six miles are called Jayestha (Elder) Madhya (Central) and Kanishta (Younger) Pushkar.

'The Jyestha Pushkar', says Harbilas Sarda, 'is the place where Brahma prepared to perform his yagna. All the Gods attended. As, however, no important function, religious or social, can be performed amongst the Hindus by a man unless he is joined in it by his wife—for according to Hinduism, a man and his wife both together form one entity, and the one without the other always remains only a

part and not a whole—Brahma had to wait for his wife Savitri, to begin the yagna. Savitri would not come without Lakshmi (wife of Vishnu), Parvati (wife of Siva), and Indrani (wife of Indra) whom the god Pavan (air) had been sent to summon. As the auspicious hour was getting very near and Savitri would not come unless accompanied by the other goddesses, Brahma was angry and asked Indra to get him a girl whom he could marry and begin the yagna. Indra brought a Gujar's daughter, named Gayatri. Brahma married her and the yagna commenced. A demon appeared and interrupted the sacrifice at the instigation of Siva. Eventually Siva removed the interruption on the condition that he should also have a temple to himself at Pushkar. Savitri appeared as the sacrifice was nearing its end. Seeing Gayatri in her place, she became enraged; Brahma tried to pacify her, but did not succeed. She went in a rage to the hill called Ratnagir (the hill of gems), to the south of Pushkar on which stands a temple dedicated to her. The largest and the most fashionable of the fairs of Ajmer is held here every year on Bhadra Sudi 8th (August)'.

According to extant coins, the Pushkar temples may be ascribed to as early as 4th century. According to legends Muni Vishwamitra performed his "Tap" here and Apsara Menaka took her bath in the sacred tank. A Jain ruler Padamsen also built a city named Padamavatinagari which had about one lakh houses. It was famous as 'Konkan pilgrimage' for Jain devotees.

It is said that Pushkar was restored in the first quarter of 9th century A.D. by the Rajput King, Narhar Rao of Mandore. One day while hunting here in Pushkar thirst led him to the lake. On dipping his hands in the water, he found that the original tan had been restored to his hand, which was full of ugly spots caused by leucoderma. Realising the sacredness of the soil, he got the place cleared and built

temples and ghats. Gurjars dominated the pushkar after the eclipse of the chauhans from the scene. In 1157, a group of sanyasis attacked and defeated Gurjars and restored the place to Pushkar Brahmins, keeping the five principal temples under the charge of their own representatives.

Situated seven miles to the north west and separated from Ajmer by the Nagpahars, Pushkar, a famous holy place of Hindus, has more than hundred temples. Devotion to relegion has been exhibited in each temple of this place which attracts large number of people every day. Dominant among the temples are those of Varah, Brahma, Rama, Mahadev and Rangnathji.

Varah temple

Existing in a corner of the city of Pushkar, the temple of Varah was built by Raja Arnoraj in the 12th century. Like other shrines of the country, it could not escape the attention of the Muslim vandals. The temple was renovated by Rana Sagar, but again it was desecrated by the bigotry of Mughal King Aurangzeb. Despite all these ravages it has served as a monument of Hindu culture.

The original temple of Varah stood fifteen feet high and beautifully sculptured in the ancient Hindu architectural art. Raja Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur constructed a building on the ruins which remained intact till today. According to the inscriptions found in the ruins, the idol was installed in the year 1727 A.D. The temple was again renovated by Rajadhiraj Bakht Singh in the latter half of 18th century. Every year in the month of Bhadra on the eve of Jhaljhulni ekadashi the idol of Varah is taken in procession for a sacred bath in the tank of Pushkar. The image house of this temple is also rich in decor and ornamentation.

Brahma temple

According to historians, all the temples at Pushkar were razed to ground by the religious bigots. But the religious fervour and faith did not diminish and Gokal Chand Pareek, a minister of Scindia built a new temple at a cost of Rs. 1.30 lakh on the site where a sacrifice was performed. The four armed life size statue of Brahma—God of creation—stands in 'antralaya'. The steps and the floors of the temple are studded with the silver rupees, donated by the worshippers. "It is remarkable" says Kanwar Lal, "that the worship of Brahma who was originally a deity of supreme importance should have almost wholly died out. He was, no doubt, humiliated by Shiva as that celebrated legend of the endless, unfathomable lingam relates; but so was Vishnu. Why should his worship alone become a phenomenon of such rarity? As usual, there are several legends which seek to clarify this. One of these has been referred to above, and possibly, the curse invoked by Savitri's wrath had some effect. Brahma's incestuous conduct was another stumbling in the way of his worship worthiness. Again, he is represented, in more legends than one, as a low god who would not hesitate to produce perjurious witnesses in support of his own false statements. A more satisfactory argument, however, it is that Brahma, as the creative force, had, of necessity, to lie dormant while the universe passed through the phases of wear and tear, of maintenance and final dissolution. Till then, till the next cycle of creation, the gods that mattered were, obviously, Vishnu the preserver and Shiva the Destroyer. The clash and conflict and, therefore, the issue of human happiness and sorrow the fate of mankind lay as between, and with, these two deities. The result was that barring an individual here or a group there who might indulge in his worship for the sake of worship, the rest of mankind could neither be expected to take nor did take any interest in a god,

who was, for all practical purposes, defunct. His worship, therefore, came to be limited to this place, Pushkar, which he had chosen to abide at and which acquired, through the permanance of his divine presence, a great sanctity".

In the month of October-November a huge fair is held and large number of devotees from all parts of the country congregate to have the blessings of their lord.

Ramavaikunthnath temple

Among the imposing and largest temples, is that of Ramavaikunthnath. It belongs to Vaishnava sect of Ramanujacharya. The viman or gopuram over the inner temple of Ramavaikunthnath was built in accordance with the rules of architecture given in the 'Jaykham Samahita'. The image of this temple is of 'Paramurti'. The viman is built of stone and contains sculptures of 361 deities. In front of the inner temple or nijamandir stands the golden Garud, the vahan or transport of Vishnu. The outer gopuram built over the principal entrance of the temple is of brick and mortar, which contains elaborate carvings. This was also built and decorated by south Indian masons brought specially for the purpose. Four images of Garud are placed in as many corner, reflecting the Vaishnava character of the temple. It was constructed by late Seth Magni Ram Bangar in 1920 A.D. at the cost of rupees eight lakhs.

Mahadev temple

In praise of modern temple of Mahadev at Pushkar, Col. Broughton writes—'Of the modern temples, the one dedicated to Mahadev, is by far the most remarkable, for the elegance of its structure and the nature of its ornaments,

of all the temples that Pushkar boasts of.' It was built by Annaji Scindia of Gwalior. The image of white marble has five faces, each one crowned with Jatta (tuft of hair).

Rangji temple

Rangji temple is dedicated to Ramanuj Vaishnava worship. The priests are Dravidian Brahmins. This temple was built in 1844 A.D. by Seth Puranmal. Simple in architecture, the walls of the temple are decorated with paintings depicting the various scenes of the life of Lord Krishna. The impact of south Indian architecture is visible in the outer view of the temple. Sikharas are richly carved out with images of gods and goddesses giving it a majestic look blended with religious touches.

There are also other temples of Badrinath renovated by Thakur of Kherwah in 1800 A.D., the temple of Savitri built by the purohit of Maharajah Ajit Singh of Marwar and Behariji's temple constructed by the Maharani of Jaipur in 1835 A.D.

RANAKPUR

SITUATED six miles from Sadri and ninety five miles from Udaipur, Ranakpur is famous for its group of Jain temples, a treasure house of art and architecture. Set in the picturesque surroundings of the Aravalli ranges, it presents the blending of religious of architecture with that of nature's scenic splendour. Thousands of devotees and other tourists visit this place, for it is an important place of pilgrimage of the Jain Panchateertha of this region.

The Chou-mukha (four-faced) temple, also called 'Trailokya Deepak' at the time of its foundation, is the main temple of the group. The temple was constructed by Dharna Shah who was encouraged by the warrior, administrator and great builder Rana Kumbha of Mewar in the year 1439 A.D. The Rana not only gave an impetus but also contributed financially to the building of the temple, for, Ranakpur was a part of the Mewar territory during his reign. An inscription on a pillar states that Deepak, the builder of this temple, did so at the behest of "a devout worshipper of

the Arhats" named Dharnaka. The temple greatly revereren-ced by devotees is one of the five holy places of the Jain sect. Other four pilgrim centres are Mushala Mahavir, Narlai, Nadolgram and Verkana.

Attracted by large number of Jain devotees, a quadruple image of lord Adinath adorns the inner temple, which is open all the four sides. It is three-storeyed and constructed on a huge basement of forty-eight thousand sq. feet. The temple has four subsidiary shrines and eighty domes supported by 400 columns. There are 24 mandapas and 44 spires imparting majesty and sublimity to the whole structural mass of the temple. Five large domes on sanctuaries add to its grandeur and splendour. Surveyed from across the ascent, the temple has the appearance of a forest of pillars, where the play of the light and shade present a fascinating spectacle. The walls of the shrines lead to their seclusion from the main temple and give them a distinct look. The structure of the temple is marvellous and every nook and corner of the pillars and the sabha-mandapa are engraved with the images relating to Jain religion. Though built in the 15th century, it gives the appearance of a newly built-temple.

On stepping inside the main shrine, one feels absorbed in devotional atmosphere all around and is struck by the sculptural perfection. One is amazed to see the heavy mass of structure, standing in perfect condition on 1,444 pillars for the last five hundred years. A difference could be marked in the structure of every pillar. Another characteristic of the temple is the erotic carvings on its exterior parts interpreting the principles of Jainism i.e. an intention of creating aversion. The exuberance and splendour of these shrines has attracted critics and they have praised them eloquently. In the words of Fergusson-"I know of no other building in India, of the same class, that leaves so pleasing an impression or affords so many hints for the graceful arrangement

of columns in an interior." According to Klaus Fischer 'The principal impression conveyed by this temple is the variety and multiplicity of its parts, yet all are well proportioned and uniformly disposed within the scheme. Then there is the contrast of the pointed spires with ovoid domes, and the fretted roofs, each of a different character and height, but each signifying the position of some chapel, hall or tabernacle within. In the interior are the unending vistas of the columns interrupted at intervals by open courts, each compartment ceiled with carving of a most intricate character, and the whole illuminated by either direct or reflected light which is thrown from pavement to pillar, and from pillar to screen to penetrate into all parts.'

In spite of its secluded location and protection, provided by the natural hill, the temple could not escape the inconoclastic fury of Aurangzeb. It is said that Aurangzeb, though marching in a great hurry on this route purposely stopped for some time to mark his presence in this shrine by mutilating and defacing the artistic and beautiful pieces of sculptural architecture. Architects are now busy mending this loss with a view to restoring its structural grandeur and sculptural dexterity.

PILANI

Sharda temple

THE small village of Pilani, about 70 miles from Jaipur, has become in a big and important centre in the realm of education by the active efforts of the Birla family. The opening of the Sharda temple was performed by Mr. Morarji Desai on 6th February, 1960.

The temple sculptured in the old Hindu style of architecture in white marble gives a beautiful glimpse. The construction reflects the great impact of Vishvanath temple of Khajuraho. White marble pieces of fine quality were used along with gold on the kalashas of copper. The height of the shikharas of the entrance mandapa is forty two feet. The shikharas of ardhmandapa and mahamandapa are round in shape and the height of the main shikhara is one hundred and nine feet. The whole temple of the Mother Sharda is standing on pillars. It is richly engraved and decorated with the pictures of gods and goddesses along

with the famous scientists and thinkers of the world to give an idea of Vasudeva kutumbakam (world brotherhood).

While entering the temple through the torana gate, one cannot but appreciate the artistic skill of modern artists who have given it a new look with a pattern of the old Hindu style. The gate has two images of Vam Vinayak on both sides and surbalas on the top.

The Sharda temple has 446 big images and 513 small ones engraved in lintels, pillars and garbagraha. The images of Ashutosh, Shri Balmiki and pictures of childhood stage of Lord Krishna are displayed in the ardh-mandapa. In mahamandapa, Narsingh Bhagawan, Vishnu, Dhruva, Mahishasur Mardini, Durga and cow-worship scenes relating to Lord Krishna are engraved. The images of Shankar, Rama and prominent episodes from the life of Krishna are artistically depicted in the interiors of the temple. Besides various poses of dancing girls, Kinnars and Shardhuls are shown around in the style of Khajuraho. The proportionate depiction, expression and scenes of dancing poses display artistic skill of high quality.

The outer sector of the eastern wing gives a glimpse of the stories from the Lord Rama's life. In the centre, Maricha's vadh and a forest scene are presented. In the last row, the images of Siva Parvati, Laxmi Narayan and Durga on Vaman avtar are depicted. The middle lines are decorated with the images of great men like Vedvyas, Brahaspati, Balmiki and Manu. The third line shows the scenes of the drinking of poison by Lord Mritunjjaya and scenes of the nativity of Krishna and Rama. The gallery of maha mandapa and shikhara is engraved with Krishna with Gopikas, Yama, Garuda, Vishnu and beautiful damsels. In the other section are the images of Panini, Bhaskarcharya, Patanjali, Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya, Sheshnag, Varun, curd making by mother Yashoda

and Yaksha Yakshanis and Surbalas. Just below are the images of politicians and writers like Chanakya, Mahatma Gandhi and poet Kalidas. Along with these, there are other images of Swami Dayanand, Guru Nanak, Vivekananda, Lokmanya Tilak, Vaidya Dhanvantri, Ravindranath Tagore, Greek scientist Archemedies, Madame Curie, C.V. Raman, Rama Krishana Paramahans, Dr. Fleming, Louis Pasteur, Thomas Edison, Lenin, Einsten, Zoroaster and Newton, etc. to give it a cosmopolitan look and also to make it a source of high and scientific bearing with one not forgetting the spiritual things also. The temple predominantly depicts the scenes of Ramayana and Geeta to encourage the new generation to emulate them and to appreciate the high values of life.

Thus this temple, new in construction but built in old style, represents a fusion of the old and the new art and architecture.

ABU

ABU has been placed on the map more because of its famous temples of Delwada than as a hill station. The grandeur of these temples and sculptural skill of the masons remind us of their mastery over the chisels and their imagination. There is hardly any portion of roof, gate, torana and sabhamandapa, left without the mark of artistic perfection. In the words of K.M. Munshi, 'the Delwada temples on Mount Abu were the outstanding productions of the western school in its Jain aspect. They are not monuments of architecture, but are sculptural masterpieces, reared one upon, to fashion one of the sculptural wonders of the world.'

According to inscriptions and historical records, Abu was a centre of the Naga tribe in 600-800 B.C.. The Mahabharata refers to the ashram of Saint Vashist at Abu. According to Jain inscriptions, Lord Mahavira, the preceptor of Jain relegion also visited this place and blessed the inhabitants. Megasthenese also referred to Abu and

noticed gold and silver mines near Mount Capitalia. The famous temples at Delwada at Mount Abu are situated about twenty miles from the Abu Road railway Station.

Vimal Vasahi temple

This temple was constructed by Vimal Shah, Minister of Raja Bhimdeo in 1021 AD. at a cost of about nineteen crores of rupees at that time. Vimal Vasahi temple built in white marble, out of group of four temples situated in a cluster, is famous for its rich art and Jain architecture. As regards the construction of this magnificient shrine a legend relates as—'once upon a time, the great Jain monk Dharamaghosha Suri came to Chandrawati and at Vimala's request, decided to spend the rainy season in this lovely city. The day to day preachings of the monk led Vimala to introspection and deeply religious thoughts. Vimala ultimately requested the teacher to prescribe to him some act of atonement for the great sins of killing (hinsa) and such others committed in statecraft. The monk said that no prayaschitta (religious practice for atonement of sins) was prescribed for sins committed knowingly and deliberately. How ever since Vimla had sincerely repented for them and asked for atonement, the teacher advised him to undertake repairs at Abu, the holy place of pilgrimage. Vimala decided to follow the advice and undertook the great task. (Holy Abu).

According to an another legend, the Goddess Ambika was pleased with the deep devotion and virtues of Vimala Shah and asked him for his desire. Being issueless, Vimala asked for a son and help in building a magnificient temple. The Goddess told him that only one of his desires could be fulfilled and asked for his preference, The minister was puzzled very much. On the advice of his wife, he requested for the fulfilment of his later desire to perpetuate

his name by building the beautiful structure. It is said that Vimala Shah had to pay a very heavy price to get the land for the temple from the Brahmin owners. He had to pay the gold coins equal to the area of the land.

The temple which is 98 feet long and 42 feet wide is surrounded by a lofty wall with 52 cells, each of which contains the image of a Tirthankar. Most of these have now been replaced. In the main shrine is installed a majestic image of Adinath, cast in gold brass alloy, about 57 inches high adoring with lovely parikara. During later renovations, the stone sculpture of Jina was installed which exists till today.

The cells are screened by an arcade of carved pillars. A pavillion facing the entrance porch contains a procession of marble elephants each bearing a statue of Vimala Shah and his family. This hastishala was constructed by Prithvipal in the year 1147-49 A.D.. A statue of Vimala riding a horse is placed near the entrance. Most of the figures which were of the ancestors of Prithvipal are now mutilated.

The temple consists of an open portico and a vestibule formed by a simple grouping of pillars. The octagonal dome of the shrine is formed by eleven concentric rings containing patterns of endless variety and is upheld by eight carved columns. A series of sixteen brackets of beaming images of the Goddess of knowledge supports the rings of the dome. The intricately carved railings illustrate incidents from Jain literature and legends including Satrunjaya Mahatmaya. A notable feature of the decoration is the exuberance of detail and effective repetetion of the same motif. It is a remarkable example of tireless inventiveness in sculptured decoration. In his book 'Saga of Indian Sculpture', K.M. Munshi says:—"There is a perfection of detail in these figures and their composition is unique but, as is

usual in Jain temples, the sensual beauty of the human body is toned down in the interests of a rounded stiffness. The rhythm of the lines is exquisite, but vigour is subordinated to refinement. What Percy Brown says of the sculptures of the Abu temples is true of most of the sculptures of the western school of the period. There is a sense of perfection, but it is a mechanical perfection with an over refinement and concentration on details. The decadence of the art of the times made exuberance a geometrical problem which it substituted for beauty." In the year 1327 A.D., this temple was renovated by two rich men Lull and Bizzar after it was ransacked by the Muslim invaders.

A visitor can distinctly notice the contrast between decoration and ornamentation on outer parts like navachoki, mandapa and cells in the courtyard and simple architecture of inner sanctum and mandapas in front. Simplicity of the shikharas in comparison to other contemporary temples of India, leads one to analyse the circumstances which compelled to such erections. Destruction of these shrines by invaders and paucity of funds with the renovators seem to be the main reasons behind construction of these parts. Another reason advanced for such low pinnacles is frequent occurence of earthquakes in Mt. Abu in the past. According to an observer,—'whatever the cause of the destruction of the earlier pinnacles may be, and whatever their original size, the later repairers could not spend enough, obviously because Muslim invasions and loot had rendered these parts poorer; the cultural and artistic activities had also degenerated due to uncertain social and political conditions created by successive invasions and internal warfare (between different petty states). Moreover, successive demolitions of these shrines might have led the people to build small temple tops in order that the shrines may not be easily marked out from a distance. It is noteworthy that the Chaumukha shrine in the group of Delwada temples, erected in the 15th century A.D., is pretty

high, though of an inferior workmanship. But in that age conditions had stabilised a little and people could erect temples like this or magnificent unique architectural specimens like the Chaumukha shrine at Ranakpur at huge costs."

Luna Vasahi temple

In the year 1230 A.D., Vastupal and his brother Tejpal, ministers of Viradhawala, built another famous temple at Mt. Abu and installed the image of the twenty-second Tirathankar Shri Neminathji. It is also said that this shrine was constructed by Tejpal for the spiritual welfare of his wife Annupamadevi and his son Lunasimha. A beautiful big image, made of the black basalt, adorns this magnificent temple. Like Vimala Vasahi temple, it had dome shaped sabha mandapa with small cells on the right side. The roof of this temple is beautifully engraved with reliefs relating to Jainism. The animate and inanimate things are so perfectly engraved that one cannot but praise the architect of this temple Sobhana Dev.

The impact of architectural competence of Kirti Stambh of Chittorgarh is visible in the pillars. The engraving on sabha mandapa roofs and pillars is enchanting and is an example of perfection. Another striking feature of this temple is the pendant of the dome which according to Fergusson "hangs from the centre more like a lustre of crystal drops than a solid mass of marble."

The hastishala or elephant house of this temple is a structure to be specially mentioned. Each of the ten apartme-nts has got an elephant of white marble. These are the rare pieces of art, beautifully and proportionately carved and shiningly polished. On each elephant there is one shravak with mahout in front and umbrella bearer in the back. The

figures are all mutilated and have lost their identity. Behind these elephants are the life size images of the builders and their relatives. The Choumukh ji in black stone stands in the centre.

Pittalhara temple

Constructed by Bhima Shaha in the 14th century at Abu, the Pittalhara temple, was dedicated to Adinath. The name Pittalhara was perhaps given to the image of Adinath, because it was cast in brass. This idol, weighing 108 maunds and 41 inches high, was got prepared by two ministers Sundara and Gada. They employed the famous artist called Deva son of Sutradhara Mandana for this purpose. Other images of the Tirthankars, though small in size, adore the temple. This shrine consisting of garbagraha, gudhamandapa and navchoki is not so exuberant in carving and style as Vimalvasahi temple. There are also small cells followed by small shrines, each representing some deity.

Choumukha temple

The Chaumukha temple known as Kharatara Vasahi temple is dedicated to Parshvanath. The erection date of this three-storeyed temple with four-fold images at each storey, is assessed around 15th century. Built with grey stone, the temple, with its pinnacle, is the tallest of all the shrines existing at Delwada. There are four mandapas adjoining the sanctum. The outer walls are engraved with deities of the Jain religion. In all there are fifty seven parikara figures in the temple, besides three Chaumukhas and a sculpture of the Goddess Ambika on the ground floor.

Other Temples

In the south of Delwada are the ruins of the temples which reveal the influence of Hinduism. Numerous images of Shankar and an idol of Hanuman are exhibited in this temple of Kumari Kanya (Virgin girl). It is said that Balmiki died of poison here because of frustration in not getting married to a virgin owing to her mother's intrigue.

Abu has been one of the main centeres of perpetuating the skill of the Hindu and Jain architecture. Besides Delwada there are other temples of Achleshwar at Achalgarh, about six miles from here where Rana Kumbha of Mewar had sought shelter for some time. The Siva temple of Orian, an abode of Dattu Briz Ganpati, is the place where Ramanand in the 14th century meditated before launching his reform movement. The temple of Vashist constructed in 1337 A.D. by Mahadev Pardhi is another shrine depicting the artistic skill of Hindu architecture. The image of Paramar, supposed to be Indra, is noteworthy.

JAIPUR

THIS beautiful pink city of Rajasthan, Jaipur, not only abounds in colourful places worth seeing but also possesses some of the famous temples of India. Their religious importance and the art and architecture exhibited here, speak of grandeur and exuberance. Bells ring in the morning and evening and create an atmosphere of religious fervour. High shikharas and domes of the temples give the visitor a glimpse of its past culture. With all its varied attractions, medieval as well as modern, Jaipur is considered as a sacred town, a place of pilgrimage sanctified by these shrines. Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan, is regarded as sacred as holy Mathura and Brindaban by the devotees of Lord Krishna and his incarnations. For here, in this city, reside those forms or 'Swarupas' of Krishna which were discovered and consecrated in the holy land of Brij by the immediate disciples of Chaitanya, and as such, are held in the highest veneration by the followers of the Madhava Gaur sect of Vaiśhnavas. The story of their arrival and enshrinement here goes back to that dark age of medieval India when Islam's bigotry was at its peak under

Aurangzeb and the Goswamis of Brindaban, trustee of these idols had to migrate with their divine trusts after leaving those magnificient sancturies, which were erected by the princes and potentates towards the end of the sixteenth or in early seventeenth century.

Govind Deva temple

The most sacred of these idols of lord Krishna is that of Govind Deva, believed to be one of the six forms of the Lord consecrated by Vajranath, the great grandson of Krishna himself. Vajranath, an unrivalled sculptor of his age, is said to have first made the divine figure of Madan Mohan and asked his grand mother, who had the privilege of seeing the Lord in person, if it was a perfect representation. The grand mother replied that the statue had brought out the legs and the feet of the lords as they were but the other parts no resemblance. Vajranath, thereupon carved out another figure with the epithet of Gopinath which represented faithfully the chest and the arms. The third and the last idol he chiselled was that of Govind Deva which in countenance had a remarkable likeness with Shri Krishna, the eyes appearing like lotus leaves.

The discovery of these idols was left to those men of religion from Bengal who were deputed early in the sixteenth century by Chaitanya to regain and purify the lost and forgotten places of Brij, the land of Krishna's birth and sports, and restore them to their former sanctity and glory. The two Goswami brothers, Roop and Santan, who had come under the mesmaric influence of Chaitanya and left their high posts in the Muslim kingdom of Gaur to fall in reverential devotion at the feet of the Lord. They came to Brindaban and found the sacred idols of Govind and Madan Mohan with all the myth and mystery characteristic of religious legends.

Govind Deva the legend goes, appeared in a dream before Roop Goswami and enjoined upon him to take out an idol which was under ground. The spot was indicated by a cow which would not move from the hallowed spot and started milking by itself. The idol was unearthed and in the rising tide of devotional Vaishnavism it assumed such significance and celebrity that the greatest and the grandest temple in Brindaban, whose architectural importance still remains beyond question, was erected to house the divinity in 1590 A.D. by Raja Man Singh of Amber, Akbar's trusted General, who had during his prolonged governorship of Bengal and Bihar come under the influence of the cult of Chaitanya. Akbar made a land grant of 135 bighas to this temple to which Chaitnaya himself is also said to have sent his personal God-Guzar Govind with one Kshitwar Pandit for consecration and worship along with Govind. This little idol of Krishna is still seen by the side of Govind Deva. The idol of Radha, was subsequently consecrated beside Govind at the behest of an Orissan chief, Prataprudra.

The second find, Madan Mohan, lacked this element of mystery in its origin. Going round Mathura for alms, Sanatan Goswami, it is said, saw this beautiful image in the portico of a Chaubey and asked for it. The owner, an old lady, agreed but advised the Goswami to offer Baatti (round cake) daily to the deity in his repast. The condition was agreed to and 'Baatti' is still offered to Madan Mohan which was constructed on a lavish scale by some wealthy merchant near Yugal Ghat in Brindaban.

The third idol Gopinath, revealed himself under the holy banyan tree where Krishna used to play on his flute in Brindaban by one Madhu Pandit, an earnest devotee who in devotional ecstasy had retired from Bengal to the wild grooves of Brindaban in the middle of the sixteenth century. It adorned an equally magnificient shrine built by Raisal Darbari, a

prominent courtier of Akbar and the Raja of Khandela, a chief of Amber. About the same time the Govind Deva temple was erected.

As the centres of popular Vaishnavism and devotional worship, the three temples continued to grow in importance and riches for about a century, when in April, 1669, A.D. Aurangzeb issued his 'Firman' for systematic demolition and destruction of Hindu places of worship and it became imperative for the Goswamis to carry the sacred idols away from their stately temple and save them from destruction. They were first brought to Radhakund and to Kama, both in the holy land itself, not very far from Brindaban, and then to Amber, where Lord Govind found rather an insignificant temple on the bank of the Man Sagar lake in the southern outskirts of Amber and the area came to be called as 'Kanak' or little Brindaban for the presence of Govind and the profusion of Kadamba trees around. This happened in 1715 A.D. But nothing is to be seen now of that old temple which was washed away by the monsoon in Mansagar. The imposing edifice at the foot of the Amber hills is now erroneously said to be the old temple of Govind. In fact, it was and is still the temple of Radha Madhava, the idols being stated to be those worshipped by the poet Jayadeva and brought there sometime before Govind from Brindaban.

Lord Govind venerated as the tutelary divinity of the ruling house of Amber and the real king of the state—the Maharajas always styled themselves as Govind-Diwan or Ministers of Govind. Idol was brought in the year 1916 A.D. to the Jai Niwas Garden of the present city palace in Jaipur, which was then in the midst of the royal haunting grounds and was developed as a pleasure garden by Sawai Jai Singh. Later when this ruler founded the new city of Jaipur as his capital, Govind Deva was finally installed in the spacious pavillion in front of the Chandra Mahal. Gopinath and

Madan Mohan also arrived subsequently and found their shrines in the Purani Basti quarter of the city. The image of Madan Mohan was transferred to Karauli, 115 miles from Jaipur, during the reign of Sawai Pratap Singh (1770—1803). While Govind Gopinath rose in popular devotion and prominence at Jaipur drawing thousands of devotees not only from this place but from distant Bengal and Bihar. Pilgrims who come to Jaipur make it a point to visit all the three divinities under one sun i.e. from dawn to dusk, for the three taken together are supposed to provide a perfect and complete glimpse of Lord Krishna, the healer of all worldly pains.

Radha Damodar and Radha Vinod temples

Besides these principal shrines, the Gaur sect has other temples in Jaipur to which similar sanctity is attributed. These, dedicated to Radha Damodar and Radha Vinod, are located in the heart of the city.

The idols of Radha Damodar are stated to be those which were worshipped by Jeeva Goswami, nephew of the two Goswami brothers. Jeeva's two disciples, Haridas and Krishnadas shared the worship of Govinda and Radha-Damodar respectively. In the Radha Damodar temple, a big boulder of the sacred mount, Goverdhan, which Lord Krishna lifted on his little finger to protect Brij and its inhabitants from the wrath of Indra, the Rain God, is also venerated. Marked with a cow's foot-print, this boulder is said to be a divine gift to Roop Goswami in his old age and a circumambulation around it is believed to give the same benefaction and merit as a round of the sacred mount itself.

The other temple, that of Radha Vinod, houses the idols worshipped by Loknath Goswami, a school-mate and a

personal friend of Chaitanya, whom the Lord had sent to Brindaban ahead of himself and other preceptors. His only disciple was Narottam Thakur, the poet-prince of Manipur. The followers of the Thakur when on pilgrimage have to visit this temple and pay homage to the "Gaddi" of its high priest.

Of these and over a thousand other shrines in this city of temples, the temples of Govind Deva, Gopinath and Radha Demodar can be said to dominate the life of the city. The number of devotees who throng the Govind temple daily is about 10,000 while an even number must visit the other two shrines as part of their daily routine.

The esteem and veneration in which these sacred idols were held by the ruler of Jaipur are indicated by the liberal donations of land, gardens, pastures and cash made by the State for the upkeep and maintenance of these temples. Govind Deva, being the "Raja" of the State, had the maximum, jagir, 22 villages with an annual income of Rs. 40,000 while Gopinath, Radha Vinod and Radha Damodar held estates of annual rent of Rs. 5,000, Rs. 5,000 and 3,000 respectively, besides other land grants made by the feudatory chiefs of the State and donations received through private munificence. The Goswamis too enjoyed high honours.

The pilgrimage season in Jaipur as also is the holy land of Brij lies in the months of Sawan and Bhadon when with the advent of rains, the Gods swing in their gold and silver "Jhoolas" and their 'Shringar' or embellishment is seen at its best. As bands of devotees from Bengal, Bihar, Manipur and other parts of India throng and intermix with local crowds in these temples, one is inclined to think of the tremendous unifying influence these sacred idols and popular cult of devotion still exercise on the masses. And, one feels as if the unity of India, the unity in diversity and what, we now call

emotional integration, manifests itself spontaneously at these houses of God.

Visheshwar and Raj Rajeshwar temples

Situated in the heart of the city near Tripolia the temple of Lord Vishveswarji, generally known as the temple of Tarkeshwar, was constructed by Dewan Vidhyadhar of Jaipur about three hundred years ago. The contemporary temple of Raj Rajeshwar exists in the inner premises of the Chandra Mahal and had been enjoying the privilege of being worshipped by the members of the ruling family of Jaipur exclusively. The Lord's idol of Paras is one of the main attractions to the devotees.

Temple of Visheshwar having gold-plated gates, a high sabhamandapa of marble depicting the beautiful and artistic paintings on the walls and roof give a clue to the emergence of modern art in the architecture of the religious shrines. The pillars are engraved and are strictly according to Hindu architectural style. Balconies and zharokhas in the temple and a huge Nandi cow made of brass are additional attractions. The small temples of Ganesh on the right and Bhairon on the left, having full size statues also exist. The idol of Vedvyas has very recently been installed in a side of the main temple.

Architecturally these temples do not need any comment as they are constructed in a simple style. The impact of Muslim architecture is visible in the pillars, zharokhas and roofs.

Madho Behari Temple

Richly painted with the pictures of rulers from Dashrath —the originator of Suryavansh—to the present ruler Sawai Man Singh II and various scenes depicting Krishna's killing of Kansa, kidnapping of Rukmani, marriage of Siva and Narsinghji-Ko-Mahero etc. are some of the chief attractions of the Madho Behari temple situated opposite the police lines in Jaipur city. This temple having big gates and spacious place for worshipping, was constructed by the third Maharani of Maharaja Madho Singh in the year 1922. The Maharani who was a great devotee of Madho Behari passed her whole life in the service of her beloved lord here.

On the right side on the wall is a beautiful and rare piece of painting which shows the Manthan under the Golok (land of cows), giving an idea and glimpse of hell and heaven. The paintings of Yampuri, Kailashpuri and Indrapuri etc. are some of the other examples,. It consists of a group of five temples; among them, Jagannath temple possesses its distinctive place. The temple is famous for its peaceful atmosphere.

AMBER

BEFORE the foundation of Jaipur city in 1728 A.D., Amber had been the capital of the princely State of Jaipur and was the site of many a furious battle. The fort of Amber, known as Jaigarh, built on a hill top was capable of catering to the needs of the people living there. Apart from the captivating natural charm, Amber has been a prominent place for the tourists for its centuries—old palatial buildings and sculptural art, which are mostly adorned with the Mughal or mediaeval sculpture. Presently, the temple of Shiladevi and Jagat Shiromani are the biggest attractions for the tourists. These temples, apart from their religious importance, are also the finest monuments of glory and splendour of Rajput architecture.

Jagat Shiromani Temple

Named after the sacred and lasting memory of his son Jagat Singh, this temple, built by Raja Man Singh pro-

vides a rare piece of Rajput architecture. Some say that the temple was not built by Raja Man Singh, but it was built by Rani Kanakavati. The temple situated at the north-west foot of Amber and built on the lines of Hindu architectural pattern, offers a most impressive and picturesque look. The impact of Muslim architecture is not visible anywhere as in the other temples of that period.

The temple made of marble is built on a 15 foot high raised platform. The main sanctum containing images of Radha, Girdhar Gopal and Vishnu and an oblong hall discloses the charm and beauty of the masterly sculptured art and architecture. The image of a stupendous Garuda standing in front of the temple with folded hands adds to its grandeur. The sculptures present an exquisite narrative which strike every student of art. The main temple cost Raja Man Singh about rupees ten lakhs.

Shiladevi Temple

Just near the palace building on the hill is a temple of Shiladevi, the main attraction for tourists as well devotees. The present temple has all the ingredients of the regal qualities and values of the old structural style of the religious institutions although it has been renovated by the present Jaipur Maharaja only a couple of years ago.

A number of legendary tales are current about the installation of the idol of Shiladevi in this temple. According to the archaeological narration at the entrance of the temple, the idol was brought from Bengal during a campaign of Raja Man Singh. It is said that after an unsuccessful attempt to defeat Kedar Raja, Man Singh sought the blessings of the idol for success in his campaign, the Goddess urged her release from the clutches of Raja

Kedar in return. Accordingly to the pledge the Goddess helped Man Singh to win the battle and Man Singh also emancipated the idol from the clutches of Raja Kedar. Another story says that the idol was presented to Raja Man Singh by Raja Kedar in the marriage of his daughter to the former. But it is certain that the present idol was made out of a 'Shila—piece' lying in the sea, and that is why the idol has been named as Shiladevi. The rulers of Jaipur have great faith in Shiladevi and this factor is alone responsible for the proper upkeep and maintenance of the temple. The entrance gate to the main temple is carved with the images of Dashmahavidhya and Nav Durga on a silver base. Inside the temple are beautiful paintings of Mahakali and Mahalaxmi painted by artist Dhirendra Ghosh. The varandah facing the 'Nij Mandir' known as 'Jagmohan' or assembly hall has a silver bell which the devotees ring before worshipping the deity. Bengali style is evident in the structures of certain pillars and 'Kadli Stambh', which are built in the natural colours of the "Prasthars".

The idols of Ganesh and Mother Hingla, the goddess of Meena clan, flank the Shiladevi. Two fairs in Navratras are also held during which animal sacrifices are made in order to please the Goddess. The members of the royal family of Jaipur and other feudal knights of the former princely state of Jaipur take part in the Navratra ceremonies.

Besides these two temples, there are the temples of Ambikeshwar, named after the founder of the Amber dynasty of Jaipur rulers, who were great devotees of Lord Siva and have legendary association with the royal families of Amber. The temple of Silavaton or the Charon Dham is also famous for its structural beauty.

BIKANER

Laxminarayan Temple

IN the heart of Bikaner city is situated the famous Vaishnava temple of Lord Laxminarayan. It was constructed by Rao Lunkaran in the first quarter of the 16th century. Incorporating all the elements of Hindu style and architecture the gates with 'toranas' adorn the temples. Standing on the pillars are beautifully engraved images of stone and marble. Marble and stone have also been used in its gumbaj, garbagraha and shikharas. The temple has a spacious place for worshippers and also a garden around. The idol of Lord Laxminarayan is richly adorned with gold and silver ornaments.

Other Hindu temples in the city are of Ratan Behariji, built by Maharaja Ratan Singh, and temple of Dhuni Nath by Saint Dhuni Nath, in the first quarter of nineteenth century. Idols of Brahama, Vishnu, Mahesh, Sun and Ganesh adorn the latter temple. The temple of Ratan

Behariji is built both in marble and stone. Another temple situated at Sivbari about six miles from Bikaner is dedicated to lord Siva. The temple built on a high platform, is simple in style.

There are also a few Jain temples in the city, among which the temples of Bhandasar and Neminathji are quite famous.

Kolayatji, 30 miles from Bikaner, is another religious centre situated on the pattern of Pushkar and is famous for its temple of Dhuni Nath and the Ashram of Kapil Muni. The temple has more natural beauty than architectural skill.

Morkhana, 28 miles from Bikaner, is famous for its temple of Sujanni Devi, built with stones, imported from Jaisalmer. The walls of the temple are richly decorated with carvings of gods and dancing girls. The roof of the temple is standing on 16 pillars. The four central pillars are of Ghatpallav style and the rest in Shridhar style of temple masonry. There are many inscriptions which give clue to its origin and history. It is very difficult to discover the exact year of its construction, but we can roughly guess it around 1170 A.D.

Karni Mata Temple

There is probably no other temple in the world which has thousands of rats moving in the shrine without any fear. But the temple of Karni Mata situated in village Deshnoke, about 20 miles from Bikaner is an example of this miracle. Nevertheless, no one has ever heard an epidemic of plague erupting due to enormous number of rats in this temple.

The temple was built by the rulers of Bikaner state with the blessings of their "Kuldevi"—Karni Mata who herself was not a worshipper of Ganesh. But still the transport of Ganpati was greatly regarded and no devotee could touch any of the rats during his worship in the temple. This famous temple attracts large crowds from Gujerat and Kathiawar also.

Historical facts of the temple relates that Karni was incarnated as "Devi" during her life-time. Karni, according to the prevalent legend, was the sixth daughter of a Charan named Meha. All the daughters of Meha are worshipped out of religious deference. while Karni attracts the upper class, the other sisters namely, Lal Bai and Phool Bai are revered by the scheduled caste people. At the age of 27, Karni was married to one Deepa of Marwar, but the marriage was dissolved soon, and since then Karni adorned the clothes of a 'sanyasin' and devoted her life to the uplift and service of the poor. According to a legend, Karni breathed her last in an unusual way. She evaporated in a flash of fire. Since then she has been regarded as an incarnation of 'Shakti'. The rats numbering about twenty thousand, spread in the premises of temple, are of special variety, called as 'kabas'. They never mix up with other rats outside the temple precincts. In 1927 A.D. when plague was raging everywhere in the State, there was not a single case of thc disease inside the temple. The worship in the temple is of 'Shakti' and not of Kaba, the vahan of the Goddess.

The temple of Deshnoke was constructed with white marble in simple architectural style. The inner gates are of gold. Funds for the temple are provided by presents of the rulers of Bikaner and by the offerings of the devotees. The puja ceremonies are performed by the Charans of the Karni's clan.

The main attraction of the temple is the congregation and movements of the rats. There is a regular budget to feed these rats with milk and sweets. Sufficient staff is employed to avoid depredations by cats and other animals. To protect them from the enemy, copper nets in the premises are also laid. Visitors are warned to be careful while moving in the temple. A rat of gold has to be presented to the temple in return for a rat killed by any person.

BANSWARA

BANSWARA situated in the eastern part of Rajasthan is predominantly inhabited by Bhils who are famous for their chivalry, gay life and devotion to religion. The area has numerous temples, of which some are in a miserable condition, though of great artistic and architectural value.

Arthuna

Thirty miles away from Banswara, Arthuna had been the capital of the Parmar princes. Old ruins of the temple are still reminiscent of its grandeur and the glorious past. The temple of Mandeleshwar was constructed by Raja Chamund Rai in 1060 A.D. to prepetuate the memory of his father Raja Mandalik. Only a few images of Lord Brahma, Vishnu, Siva-Parvati and Lakulesh are left along with the fallen walls of the temple to give an idea of the skill of the masons of those days. In the windows of the temple are placed the idols of Bhairav, Chaumunda and Siva

in Tandav nritya mudra. Just in front of this temple on a hillock are four other temples of Siva which are of simple style.

Two miles from this hillock is another group of temples known as "Hanuman Garhi" which consists of a temple of Hanuman, Varah, Vishnu and three temples of Siva. It has a tank and tunnels. Nilkantha temple has images of Navgraha, Chamunda and Uma Maheshwar. Besides these, many Jain temple ruins are also visible.

Chinch, a small village ten miles from Banswara had also been the religious centre of Bhils having many temples around. The Brahma temple built of stone reveals artistic skill. The temples of Chincha Devi, Mother Varahi, Laxminarayan, Mahadev and Sambavnath Jain temple at Talwara and Rishabdev temple at Kalonjara give vent to the feelings of devotees of this area. These temples are simple in structure and architecturally of no significance.

Dungarpur

The most famous temple in this district is of Dev Somnath. The beauty of this temple lies in the structure built of large stones without lime or cement. Apparently it looks as though it may fall down at any moment, but it has stood for hundreds of years. From the records available, construction date of this temple can be assessed around 12th century.

The temple of Bhuvneshwar Mahadev at Solaj was constructed by Maharaval Samantsingh in 1179 A.D. The temple of Vasundradevi built by a Mewar ruler Aparajit in 661 A.D. is said to be the oldest temple in the region. Mahadev temple at Veneshwar, said to be the abode of Saint

Mavji, situated on the junction of Mahi and Som rivers, attracts large number of devotees. The majority of them belong to Bhil and other tribal clans. From architectural point of view, there is nothing significant to mention of these shrines. Barod is another place 28 miles from Dungarpur, said to be, one-time the capital of Bangarpradesh, possesses good collection of Jain sculptures. The ruins of the religious shrines remind the grandeur of the period and artistic skill of the craftsmen.

JODHPUR

THE rulers of Jodhpur have been the patrons of art and architecture. Despite constant wars, they showed their religious fervour through the construction of innumerable temples in the former Jodhpur State which was the largest in Rajputana. They not only encouraged their construction but donated large sums and chunks of land for their upkeep. They also actively participated in the temple rituals.

Jodhpur city has about one hundred temples, big and small, but famous among them are the temples of Kunj Behari, Shri Ghanshyam, Tijamanji and Raj Ranchodji.

Centrally situated, the temple of Kunj Behari is the most famous. It was constructed by Rani Gulab Bai, wife of Maharaja Vijay Singh to give expression to her religious feelings and also to cherish the memory of the Lord Krishana. Like other temples it has a sabhamandapa, garbagraha and shikharas which are richly carved with the images of Gods and Goddesses.

Ghanshyam Temple

On pursuasion by his wife Rani Padmavati, daughter of Rao Jagmal of Sirohi, Rao Ganga constructed this temple in the first quarter of the 16th century and installed the idol of Shyam. It was brought from his father-in law along with the Pujaris. The idol was hidden by Pujaris to avoid ransacking by the forces of Aurangzeb but with the coming into power by Ajit Singh, it was reinstalled. Later Maharaja Vijay Singh demolished a mosque and built a temple in its place which this image adorns. The temple is famous for its plain carvings and paintings of saints in the garbagraha.

Tijamanji Temple

The temple was built by the third Maharani of Raja Man Singh of Jodhpur. She was a devotee of Lord Rama. The temple, being hardly more than a hundred years old, exhibits the impact of modern architecture on the old style. The image of Ramachandra is beautiful and moderately decorated.

Osia Temples

Thirtysix miles from Jodhpur, Osia is very important from the archaeological point of view. Constructed in the 9th century there are twelve famous temples which resemble the Jhalawar style of temples. According to inscriptions, the credit for constructing these temples went to Raja Vatsaraj. The temple of Mother Sacchika is famous all over Rajasthan and it attracts large crowds, specially young couples after the marriage. Women yearning for children also come to the shelter of the holy mother.

Besides, there are other temples of Harihar, Surya and Pippladevi which do not possess any distinctive style.

The temples of Osia are famous for their grandeur and grace. The skill of the mason is exceptional. Beautiful carvings of Gods, Goddesses and dancing girls in nritya mudras reflect the architecture of the temples. According to J.P. Guha. "The Rajasthan temples acquired a distinctive style. Usually they consist of five buildings including the shrine house. They are therefore called 'Panchayatan'. The plinths of these temples stand on a high platform as in the Khajuraho temples, while the spires bear a striking resemblance to those of the early temples at Bhubaneshwar. Some fine samples of Rajasthan temples may be seen in the village of Osia near Jodhpur. The finest of this group is the one dedicated to the Sungod (Surya) dating tenth century. Although the four adjoining shrines have crumbled off, what little remains displays the Gupta tradition of temple architecture at its best."

Nagaur Temples

Nagaur had seen the bigotry of the invaders more than any other place in Jodhpur. Demolition and construction of temples had been a continuous process here which ultimately stopped with the taking over of Nagaur by Raja Bakht Singh in the seventeenth century. Looking to the Hindu temples of Nagaur, any student of architecture would calculate their age, for, they all look new. Famous among them are the temples of Siva, Murlidhar and Barmayan. Phalodi is another place where the temples of Kalyan Rai and Shantinath exist till today. The architecture of the temples is based on the same style of Hindu architecture.

Kher temples

Kher is another historically important old village said to be once the capital of Rathor Rajputs. The temple of Ranchodji which is in a miserable condition gives us an idea of the architecture in 10th-12th centuries. The image of Garuda stands on the gate and navgrahas are engraved on the top. Nearby are temples of Brahma and Bhairon.

Bhinmal and Narlai are other places which have old temples of Surya and Lord Mahavira. The temple of Somnath at Pali constructed in 1153 A.D. by Solanki Raja Kumarpal, is famous for its carvings. Temples of Naulakha and Pateshwar at Pali had been under almost continuous renovations, thus losing their original charm. The fort of Jalore is also famous for its Jain and Hindu temples built in the sixteenth century in that area. The temple of Jalandernath constructed by Raja Mansingh of Jodhpur is a fine piece of Rajput architecture.

Nadol temples

The land of Nadol situated between Udaipur and Jodhpur territories, is about 10 miles from Desuri on way from Udaipur to Jodhpur. Once the pride of Rajput chivalry, Nadol had been facing the brunt of Muslim attacks for years. It was completely destroyed by Kutubudin Aibek in 1259. The stones of the fort and the temples scattered hither and thither remind one, of the atrocities of those barbarous invaders.

Nadol possessed the richness of Hindu and Jain temples. Ruins of Nilkanth Mahadev and Siva temple exhibit their beautiful sculptural art. The temple of Nilkantha—rectangular in shape—built within the four walls was symbolic of Hindu architecture. This temple was constructed in the 11th century. Another temple is approached by ladders

which take one to the precincts of the fort. It may be assumed that this temple was mainly used by the members of the rulers' family. Once famous for its beauty and religious fervour, this temple is in a dilapidated condition and is deserted by the Pujaris because they could not make their ends meet. Constructed with the stone and lime, the temple had the usual ancient Hindu architectural designs prevalent in that century. Ardhmandapas are examples of this style. The idol of Siva temple and its simplicity gives an inkling of that period of continuous wars and tensions.

The seat of more than hundred temples which were raised to the ground by the invaders, Nadol still has a large and high Jain temples which attract the travellers from far off places. A tunnel from this temple stretches about five miles from Nadol to Narlai.

Charbhujaji temple

Constructed by Rao Dudaji in Merta, this temple is generally known as the temple of Mirabai, a great devotee of lord Krishna and well known for her enchanting devotional songs. The gate of this temple is adorned with the life-size image of Mirabai with hair undressed and a Tanpura in one hand. The image of Mirabai makes a thrilling impression. Inside the temple is the idol of Lord Charbhujaji along with small idols in a cradle.

It is said that on the present site of the temple was the house of a cobbler. Suddenly one day his cow started giving unending milk which caused a sensation among the people. Ultimately Rao Dudaji dug the place and found the idol of Charbjujaji which was installed in this temple with full honours and rituals. Every year, a week's fair from Shravan Shukla 11 is held here.

JAISALMER

STRATEGICALLY important from border defence point of view Jaisalmer, situated in the remote corner of Rajasthan, had a great impact of Jain saints and preachers which resulted in the construction of beautiful temples. There is also a legendary tale that Lord Krishna and Arjun also made their abode here for some time and dug a well which still exists and supplies water to the inhabitants.

Parshavanathji temple

The idol of the lord was installed in Samvat 1469 by Rauka Jai Singh in this temple, which is situated in the famous fort of Jaisalmer. The construction of the temple was completed in about fourteen years. It has about a thousand images, carved in the mandapas, torana and garbagraha. The engraving in the torana and pillars is a masterpiece and gives a lively glimpse of the mastery of the artists over their chisels.

Lutherva temple

The temple at Lutherva was built anew by Seth Tharu Shah from the ruins in 1675 A.D. In the original temple exist the beautiful images of Shri Chintamani Parshavnath, in second of Rishabdev, third Ajitnathji and fourth Sambharnathji. Astapada and Kalpa tree are carved on the Trigore. The chariot which led the procession still exists in this temple. This temple is famous for its engraving on the stone windows of the walls which is rarely found in any other temple of India. It gives a majestic and artistic look to the temple. The statues of elephants artistically carved out of Jaisalmeri stone reflects the command of sculptors. The ceilings are richly adorned with the engravings depicting the tenets of Jain religion. The gates are profusely carved and the statue of the lord is shown seated on the top of the gate. The proportionate chiselling of the statues give an idea of the skill of the artists of that period.

There are also other temples of Sambavnathji, Shantinathji and Chander Prabhu Swami, constructed by the the devotees to cherish and perpetuate the memory of their lords. Their architecture and art resemble those of other temples of Jaisalmer and merit no narration.

JHALAWAR

IN Jhalawar there are several Hindu and Jain temples of which the following are the most famous and prominent.

Sitaleshwar Mahadev temple

The ruins of the old city of Chandrawati lie at a distance of about a mile from Jhalarapatan. The city was founded by Parmar King Chandrasen, but later the Muslim invaders destroyed the city. The beautiful pieces of sculpture lying here still remind one, of the grandeur and gaiety of that period. It is said that this temple was built by Vappakka, brother of Deva, in the 7th century A.D. The temple consists of an open porch, antechamber and sanctum. The temple is in a dilapidated condition having no roof and with half of the ceiling entirely missing which had superbly carved panels. The statue of Nandi stands in the hall.

The doors of this temple resemble the Ajanta style. Inside the temple there is an idol of Lakulesh, a two handed male figure seated in Padmasan and holding bijora fruit and a club in its hand. This is evident of a peculiar form of Siva worshipped in this area. The shrine is devoted to the worship of Lord Siva whose lingam occupies the centre of garbagraha. Just behind is a statue of Paravati and against the back wall, a group of Siva and Hargauri seated on Nandi. The statue of Lakulesh, which is in the museum of Jhalawar, and inscriptions throw light on the superiority of spiritual powers of a Sadhu who is said to have been instrumental in saving the place from Muslim invaders.

Foreign critics of art and architecture like Fergusson and Cunningham have praised the skill of the builders and described it, as one of the best specimens of the architecture of its period. Cunningham has said "The whole range of columns is in happy keeping and though the details of ornamentation are different, yet they are all of one general design so that there is no single pillar of strange appearance to distract the eye and spoil the architectural unity of the building."

Kalika temple

Another famous temple in the ruined city is of Mahakali, originally dedicated to Vishnu. A five and a half foot high statue with eight arms of goddess Kalika stands in the centre of the sanctum. On the pattern of Mahadev temple, this has also antaralaya or vestibule, womb house and pillars. Inscription on the pillars establish its seniority over the Mahadev temple. Statues of tenarmed Kalika and eightarmed Ganesh in the vestibule and the eight statues of Kalika in the sanctum evoke respect for the Goddess.

Besides, there are other temples of Siva, Vishnu and Varah in the environs of Chandrawati town, some of which are in dilapidated condition, but reveal beautiful aspects of sculptural art.

Padam Nath and Shanti Nath temples

There are two Jain temples of Padam Nath and Shanti Nath situated in the heart of the city of Jhalrapatan. The architecture of the former is in contrast to that of Khajuraho. As usual these temples consist of mandapa, garbagraha and antaralaya which are engraved with beautiful pieces relating to the preachings of Jain religion. The 97 feet high shikhara of Padam Nath temple can be seen from afar.

Dwarkadheesh Temple

The temple of Dwarkadheesh was built by Raja Zalim Singh founder of Jhalawar in 1796 A.D.. Situated on the Gomti sagar tank it commands a picturesque view. Its image was installed in 1805 A.D.. There is nothing special about its art and architecture.

The Sheetladevi temple near Navlakha fort and Juna mandir are the other two temples worth mentioning. The Sun temple situated in the heart of Jhalrapatan is also rich in architecture. The sculptural carvings of the shikharas and mandapas reveal the perfect skill of the artists.

ALWAR

THE temple of Nilkantheswar situated at a distance of about 38 miles from Alwar, in a very picturesque and natural surrounding, was constructed by Barguzar Raja Ajay Pal in Samvat 1010. One can see some beautiful pieces of carving in these stones which reminds one, of the art and skill of those days. The temple of blue throated God, with a sign of bull, faces the east. Though in a misera-able condition, it is still worshipped. Its outer walls are extensively repaired and mandapas and pillars renovated. The mandapa of the temple has four central pillars each of sixteen inches in diameter. They are richly carved out with nayikas and with frescos of musicians and dancers. The garbagraha which is six feet square, contains a black stone lingam.

On the the south face of the temple, there is an image of Siva with eight arms, holding a mace, a bow and an arrow in his left hand, while in two of his intact right hands he holds a niriga and a damaru. The left fort is braced

on the head of Nandi, and a swaying garland of skulls sweeps across his full body. Near his foot nestles Ganesh. This is Siva as Tripurantaka—He of the splendour of gold with a huge stalwart form like Meru who destroys the three castles, one of gold which was in heaven, another of silver in the air and the third of iron on the earth. The legend says that an asura king defeated the rulers of the world and having taken possession of the three regions by a feat of magic amalgamated them into one fortress. Then through his yoga, he brought about that his kingdom could only be destroyed when pierced by a single arrow. No man, no god could be found with the might to shoot that great single arrow which alone could pierce this impregnable fortress. Then Siva—the primeval hunter—the lord of the forests-lifted his bow Pinaka and shot the single arrow that annihilated Tripura, the stronghold of the demon King. The sculpture of the Nilakanteshwar temple shows Siva the hero, wearing a crown, in his right ear worn is the makara-kundala and there are anklets on his feat. He stands triumphant, poised in the Cosmic knowledge that the arrow which is to leap from his bow is symbolic of the great potential god force preordained to annihilate the stronghold of the demon king. In the uplifted, proud, bearded face, the silent all knowing smile, the lion chests the tense right leg, is manifest a master creator who, having grasped the essense of form, releases and reveals the image enclosed in the silent stone. (Pupul Jayakar, Marg Vol. XII).

Just nearby this temple, are the ruins of Jain temples. An image of Lord Tirathankar, 16 feet in height and six feet in width, stands, which is called as Naugaja or nine yards. It was built by one Bhai Shah Mahajan during the reign of Subt Berh, one of the Bargujar Raja. The head of the figure is encircled by nimbus. Sculptured elephants and flying devas holding garlands add to the glory of recumbent Jain Saint. Other ruined temples scattered around the village

appear to date back to 9th century and some sculptures even to 7th and 8th centuries, belonging to the period of Gurjara Pratihara.

Pandupole is another religious centre where the image of Hanuman is adorning and thousands of tourists and devotees visit the temple built on a high platform. It has got historic importance, for, it is held as an abode of Pandavas in these hills.

KIRADU

THE famous architectural spot in the Barmer district is the group of temples at Kiradu, situated at a distance of four miles from the village Khadin. Hardly five temples, out of a dozen temples constructed during 12th and 13th centuries, are in some shape and merit a mention. Archaeological records are silent about their builder. Inspiration came to their craftsmen from the Kathiawar temples.

Most prominent and largest of all the Kiradu temples is a Saiva structure popularly known as the Someswar temple and consisting of a shrine, antechamber, hall and a porch. The domical roof of the sabhamandapa rests on eight long pillars octagonally arranged and profusely decorated with kirtinekha and muktavarala motifs in successive rows. The bracket capitals of the pillars present the 'Monster Makara' architecture in a vivid manner. On the outside walls of the porch have been inscribed with three inscriptions, most important being those of the Vikrama Samvat 1218, 1235 etc. The outer face of the basement of this temple is

studded with horizontal moundings consisting of grining faces with horns, Asvatharas, Gajatharas and naratharas in an elegant manner. Other details presented on the exterior of the shrine, of course, remained unnoticed so far and consists of various scenes from the life of Lord Krishana (R.C. Agarwal, Marg Volume XII.)

As one moves around the temples, one finds a small temple, facing west, which is dedicated to Siva. A relief of Bhisma Pitamah lying on the bed of arrows carved out in the size of four inches in height and six inches in width deserve special mention. According to Agarwal 'None of the extant temples of Rajasthan and Western India appears to have given place to this popular episode from the Mahabharata and thus the particular sculptor of Kiradu deserves due compliments for this sucessful venture on his part.'

Other temples are in dilapidated conditions, but their architectural aspect of the sculptures found from the ruins, throw a flood of light on the taste of the people of that period. The finally carved images of females reflect their decorative sense in ornaments and dress. The ruins of shrines, telling their tale of glory resemble also with the art and architecture of the Gupta Period.

OTHER TEMPLES

AJMER

THE Jain temple of Nasian is situated in Ajmer and its goldplated shikharas could be located from afar. This Sidhakut Jain Chaitalya known as Nasian was built in 1865 A.D. It has got big halls, garbahgaha and shikhara. The temple is beautifully painted with coloured pictures and glass engraving is done on the walls, which is rarely seen in the other temples. The shrine though structured on the old pattern of temple architecture gives a new look, as it has been under constant renovation.

A big hall about 80 feet long, built behind the main temple, is embellished and decorated with coloured paintings and its glass carved-work is divided into two parts. The round shaped section is supposed to be the scene of the world's creation in which stands the Sumeru mountain on the Jambu island, having the ocean around. The right section is decorated with the scenes of Ayodhya city showing

Prayag Triveni and the picture of Lord Rishabdev in meditative mood under the shadow of a tree. Devas are shown blessing him with flowers from heaven. The north side is adorned with pretty paintings of Tilottama dancing before the Lord.

RANTHAMBORE

Seven miles from Sawai Madhopur stands the famous and big fort of Ranthambore, which has seen many furious battles with the Mughals. The chivalrous ruler Hamir belonged to this place which has made this fort important in the annals of Rajasthan. The fort was constructed in the 5th century A.D. by Maharaja Jayant. Jayantpur, a small village eight km. away, still exists, where the temple of Nilkantha Mahadev, the God of Maharaja adorns.

The temple of Ganesh built on the open land attracts every visitor for its architectural beauty. Great historians like Col. Todd and Dr. Gauri Shankar Ojha do not mention its date of construction. But seeing its architecture it can easily be assessed to belong to the 7th or 8th century. On Bhadrapad Shukla 4, a big fair is held which attracts people from all corners of India. The idol of Ganesh is skillfully sculptured. It is richly decorated on the eve of the festival.

Besides this main temple, there are also other temples which are now almost in ruins. There is a legendary tale regarding a temple of Siva situated in the thick forests, that every night a beautiful damsel visits the shrine and offers flowers to the Lord.

It is also said that the brave and dauntless ruler Rana Hamir of Ranthambore after defeating the Khilji forces

found his Ranis on pyre, which shocked him so much that he rushed to the Siva temple and committed suicide. In proof of this incident the priests of the temple show the enormously carved head of the Rana to the visitors.

VIRATRA

Simple in structure but famous for its idol, the temple of Viratra is situated six miles from Chohtan Tehsil of Barmer district. Surrounded by small hillocks and sand grooves, it attracts a large number of devotees, thrice a year, when fairs are held. Many legends centre around this holy place. It is said that an 80 year old Rajput woman, a great devotee of the Mother, could not visit the place because of the difficulties of communications. The rock sundered into two parts and out came the idol of Jagdamba appearing before the old lady. Since then this place has been called the place of Viratra Mother. Later on, the idol was installed on a platform. The Viratra mother is also a Kuldevi of the Bhopa tribes of Marwar. There are many other tales of rescue of the Bhopas from the harassment of Bhati Rajputs of Jaisalmer.

The temple is decorated with many images of Mother Jagdamba. The Mother is represented as riding a lion, having jewels around the neck and wheel, sankha, flower, trishul, sword and arrow in her hands.

HARSHANATH

The temple of Siva, built in the 10th century by the Chauhan Rajputs on the top of the Harshanath hill, 8 miles from Sikar is now in a dilapidated condition. Most of its fine sculptures, which throw light on the contemporary art and

iconography of the region are now in the museums of Sikar and Ajmer. A study of these sculptures compels one to praise their master craftsmen. The imposing presentation of Vishnu surrounded by dancers and musicians on both the sides, Siva in Tandav dance and the Pandava brothers are fine collections of the sculptural history of Rajasthan. The pillars of the temple are ornamented with carvings of Kirthi-mukha motif, musicians and dancers. A panel in the museum exhibiting the composite form of Surya, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva deserves a special mention.

The sculptures and panels pertaining to incarnation of Vishnu, Agni, Yama, four armed Lakulesh with urdhva-mendhra, Parvati and matrikas, etc. transferred from the Harshanath hill, are the proud possessions of the Sikar museum today.

RAMGARH

The magnificent piece of the early medieval art, Bhanddevra temple near Ramgarh in Kota district, stands more or less intact except for the damaged outer parts of the sikhara. According to an observer of architecture- 'The carvings, which cover the whole of the outer circle of the temple from the base of the plinth up to the sikhara, are on a very high level of accomplishment, some of the brackets, supporting the roof of the hall inside, being as delicate and exquisite as the best in Khajuraho. Only, unlike the Khajuraho temples, where the sculpture, is scooped out of the stone and stands in its own integrity as figure sculpture, the carvings on the outer facade of the Ramgarh temples are like a series of bas reliefs. The general early medieval style seems to have matured to a finer accent here than Chandrawati near Jhalrapatan, a few of the single figures being as monumental as some of the

biggest in Baroli. For instance, the torso of a mother and child, lying with broken head on the debris of the smaller temple behind the main shrine, is one of the finest specimens of the whole period.' (Marg, Vol. XII. No. 2)

Erotic figures on the pillars of the temple are sculptured in a unique style. These figures are more worldly and thus more human than divine. According to an inscription, this temple was constructed by Malayverma in the 10th century to commemorate his victory. Dedicated to Siva, it had four other temples which looked like miniature of the bigger temple on the pattern of 'Panchmandir'. The shrine is attributed to the devotees of the 'Pashupath Kol Sampraday'. It was later renovated in the 13th century by Malav Dev.

Another temple of a goddess known as Mata-ka-Mandir situated on a hillock is new in construction but simple from architectural point of view.

KANYADEH

Once the possessor of the exquisitely sculptured temples, Kishanvilas has been now reduced to a small village of few huts. Four pillared hall on the top of the mound gives clue to ponder over its great antiquity. The earliest temple was built by Yudhistar after the battle of the Mahabharat in honour of Lord Krishana.

The refusal of Raja Bhainsa Shah to marry his daughter to a Muslim Governor of Ranthambhore has been ascribed to the destruction of these beautiful temples at the hands of later at Kishanvilas. The place near Bilasi, where the daughter of Raja, drowned herself is since then called as Kanyadeh. There is hardly any architectural structure

worth noting except, few sculptures belonging to 9th and 10th centuries. The image of Krishna with his flute, Vishnu lying on Sheshnag surrounded by images of matrikas and scenes of the battles of gods and demons are some of the fine examples.

KOTA

The Mathuradheesh temple situated near the Patan Pole gate in Kota city has great importance, housing as it does, the first lord of the Vallabhacharya sect. It is said that the idol of Mathuradheesh was found in the village of Karanaval near Mathura, which was handed over to Vithalnath son of Padmanath. It was later passed on to his son Girdhar and taken to Bundi to avoid desecration at the hands of Aurangzeb in 1726 A.D. In the year 1801 A.D. it was brought back by Raja Durajansal and installed in the house of Diwan Dwarkadass at Kota.

The temple of Nilkantha built in the 16th century, near the Kishorepura gate of the Kota city attracts large crowds during the Dashera fair. Having all the characteristics of a Hindu temple, it is a small shrine built in a simple style.

KANSUA

Four miles from Kota, the temple of Mahadev at Kansua is more important for its history than a piece of architecture. It is said that Shakuntala stayed here in the ashram of Rishi Kanva. The shrine dedicated to Siva, belongs to the 8th century and was constructed by the Maurya ruler Shergan in 738 A.D. Later the temple was renovated in 1751 A.D.

The temple of Mahadev in Gaiparnath, 14 miles from Kota, is another religious centre which is famous for its perennial stream.

KESHORAI PATAN

The temple of Keshorai built on a high plinth on the banks of the Chambal is situated at Keshoraipatan, ten miles from Kota. It is as old as 35 A.D., evident from the inscriptions of Sati memorials lying on the bank of the river. It is said that Parasram built this temple and it was reconstructed by Rao Raja Chattrasal of Bundi in 18th century. Picturesque in view, the shrine was constructed in the old Hindu style of temples. The terracottas of the Gupta period throw light on its antiquity. Artistically there is nothing special to mention about it. The temple is dedicated to Keshorai and a Sivlingam exists in it. It attracts large crowds of rural as well as urban people.

ABANERI

The construction of ancient temple of Harshatmata situated at a small village of Abaneri or Abhanagari, four miles from Bandikui Railway Station in Jaipur district has been ascribed to the 9th century. The builder of this temple is unknown, but it was famous as a centre of the Shakti cult in that period.

Sculptural dexterity is revealed from the heap of stones lying around the new temple, constructed out of the ruins of the old one. The images on the inner walls of the new temple are carved in deep relief and scenes representing secular character. Pupul Jayakar reveals, 'In the post Gupta sculptures of Abaneri, inspiration has borne fruit and the

sculptured stones pulsate with surging life that gives the female form the poise and tenseness of rising sap. The secular sculptures of Abaneri illustrate scenes of music, dance, nature, beauty and the meeting of lovers. The forms are ancient, the idiom lyrical, there is a flesh of abandon, of richness and fullness handled with a restraint that is masterly.'

JAGAT

In the year 1966 archeaologists brought out to light an ancient temple of Ambikamata in the village Jagat, about 27 miles from Udaipur. Built on the pattern of Khajuraho sabhamandapas, garbagrahas and pillars are artistically carved out with erotic poses and images of dancers and musicians. According to inscription found on the pillar of the shrine, its construction date can be ascertained around the year 960 A.D. This temple built by Sampura during the reign of Guhila of Mewar has architectural kinship to Kotal temples in Gujarat. Innumerable icons and a female figure adorn the sabhamandapa and porch of the edifice.

One of the most remarkable image one finds here is of Varah having a fish in one hand, not commonly seen in other Hindu temples. According to an observer, the association of the fish with Varah is most probably due to influence of some Tantric tradition of the Siva-Shakti cult. The distinctiveness of this temple is further enhanced by carving of Ganesh in Nrityamudra, unknown in the history of the iconography. The temple of Ambika situated eight feet below the earth level, dug out intact by the archeaologists, reveals the aesthetic sense of the people and architectural dexterity of that period. Innumerable images of Durga in the exterior of the sanctum are symbolic of Shakti.

BUNDI

There are many temples in the city of Bundi and famous among them are those of Charbhuja, Kalyanraiji, Laxminathji, Hans Devi and Dadhwantumata. Rameshwaram is another picturesque spot about nine miles from Bundi where the famous Shri temple exists. There is a waterfall which streams down from a height of about 200 feet on a group of Sivalingas. Sivalinga discovered about five hundred years ago is carved out of a rock.

SHRI MAHAVIRJI

Four hundred years ago an image of Mahavirji was found which lead to the construction of the present temple. Hundreds of devotees visit this place every day to offer their reverence to Lord Mahavir. The temple is based on a high plinth and composed of big verandas.

The high shikharas of the temple are visible from far away. Fifty two feet high 'Man' pillar is beautyfully made of marble. The temple is quite rich with decorative paintings relating to the life and stories of Jain religion. Colours have most profusely and intelligently been used to make these pictures symbolic.

JHUNJHUNU

The temple of Ranisatiji, situated at Jhunjhunu, is greatly revered by the devotees. The shrine has thirteen small temples inside, each dedicated to a Sati. The main temple has garbagraha and an antarlaya. On the entrance is a big dharamshala having more than 100 rooms and a small garden. According to historical records, Narainibai,

later called as 'Shri Rani Satiji', was returning with her husband Tandhandas, from her parent's house, when he was treacherously killed in a fight with Nawab Jharchand. The Rani fought with all valour and defeated the enemy. But as a devout woman, she put herself on the pyre along with corpse of her husband Tandhandas. Since then she has been acclaimed as Sati and at this place was built the sacred temple.

TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

RAJASTHAN has significantly contributed towards the architectural richness of the country. The evolution of temple architecture has its source from small shrines, initially erected to give a fillip to the religious feelings of the people. These small objects of stones later took the form of big shrines, where people began to congregate. Early temples were of a single cell having a portico attached to them. The 4th and 5th centuries ushered in a golden era in the architectural history. Decor and religious fervour were combined to mark an impact on the devotees.

The masons began to experiment with new designs in temple building in the fifth century. Super structures of stones were erected in the ceilings, which looked like pyramids with either straight or curvilinear sides. According to Rawson, 'One characteristic and constant feature of the Indian temple, from the earliest times was an ornate frame on the exterior of the cell door bearing sculptured figures of the purifying river goddesses Ganga and Yamuna at

the base of jambs, an ornate lintal usually with the figure of the Goddess of good fortune in the centre and a series of small pannels of amorous couples ranged up to the jambs. From about 600 onwards, it also became conventional to employ a great deal of figure sculpture chiefly in panels of narrative or iconic relief, ceiling ornament, friezes of flying celestials and vagetation and water dieties on the brackets of the column capitals.'

The Pallavas played a significant role in bringing the structural changes in temple construction in India. Large pillared halls were added to the shrines and portico already existing perhaps was meant to facilitate the dancing by devadasis and other devotees. A new material, lime plaster, was profusely used in decorating the exterior walls. Various designs of round moulded capitals and miniature bind pavilions on the plinth adorned these magnificent shrines.

Rajasthan has not only been famous for valorous deeds and sacrifices, but also for magnificent temples. In architecture, Rajasthan evolved a super style of its own, which found expression in the beautiful temples of Osia, Kiradu, Harsha, Ajmer, Abu, Chandrawati, Badoli, Gangodhara Menal, Chittor, Jalore and Bagehra. The Chauhans, along with the Paramaras and some other Rajput clans, appear to have been great builder, and the Prithvi Raj Vijay recounts among their achievements not only the victories they won but also the splendid temples that they erected. Vakpati Raja built a temple of Vyomavasas (Siva) at Pushkar. His son the Maharajadhiraja Simharjya, who was as ardent a saivite as his father, built a temple for the same deity at Pushkar and helped with munificent donations to the construction of the Harasanatha temple. Vigraharaja II's temple of Asapuri at Broach, is no longer in existence. But it might have been a splendid structure. The location of Chamundarya's temple of Visnu at Narapur remains unknown.

But all these structures appear to have been surpassed in splendour by the temple erected in the regions of Ajaya Raja, Arno Raja Vigraharaja IV, Somesvara, and Prithviraja III. To Vigraharaja IV's reign belonged the temple which the Muslims turned into the Mosque known as Adhai-deen-ka-Jhompra. 'For gorgeous prodigality of ornament, beautiful richness of tracery, delicate sharpness of finish, laborious accuracy of workmanship, endless variety of detail, all of which are due to Hindu masons. This building says Cunningham, may justly vie with the noblest building the world has yet produced' (Rajasthan through the Ages).

The excavations at Kalibangan in Bikaner have linked Rajasthan with the pre-Harrappan culture. Though sculptures have been found of early periods in Nagari and other places, we have in evidence, the intact temples at Kansua and Chittorgarh of as early a period as 8th century. The present Kalika Mata temple at Chittorgarh was originally built as a Sun temple in 8th century and latter on was given the present shape. The temple at Kansua was built by Shergan Maurya in 738 A.D. These shrines throw an interesting light on the evolution of the temples in Rajasthan.

The temple art had assumed a definite style and form by the last phase of the Gupta period. The Hindu architecture was classified into Nagara, Dravid and Besara Schools. The last School was influenced by Buddhistic Chitragrahas. According to observers the Nagara system is symbolic of sacred mountain of Vishnu and Dravid of Siva. Fergusson maintained that Nagara pattern prevailed from the Himalaya to the Vindhyachal and the Dravida from the Krishna river to Kanya-kumari. But Havell disagreed and pointed that both the schools sprang up simultaneously in both the regions. The Osia and Kiradu temples in Rajasthan adore both systems. Shrines dedicated to Siva as well as Vishnu exist in both the places.

The principles of architecture were strictly adhered to in the construction of the Hindu and Jain temples which sprang together side by side. The Sthapak or the chief architect was responsible for preparing its plan. His plan was executed by the craftsmen classified as Silpin, Sthapak, Sutragrahini Takshak and Virdhakin. Though uniformity existed in the structures but the regional influences could not escape notice, which are clearly evidenced in decor of garbgraha, sikharas and ceilings of the temples.

Rajasthan inherited the direct successionship of the building art of the Gupta period, which was considered as the golden period for its exuberance of new motifs in art. The Osia temples group is one of the most perfect monuments in the field of architecture. According to Percy Brown—"The significance of the pillar and its capital in the temples at Osia has been already emphasised, but in some of the examples that distinctive motif the 'vase and foliage' attained its supreme form. Although not universal, this type of capital may be regarded as the 'order' of the Indo Aryan style, and in the hands of some of the sculptors it has been made into singularly graceful feature. One of the most elaborate example of the vase and foliage convention may be seen in the porch pillars of the Mahaveera temple of the eighth century. Not only is this element introduced into the capital of the pillar, but with a slight modification, it has also served as the base. This enrichment however did not satisfy the Indian artist, it was merely one incident in his design, for order and above this he piled on another ornamental devices almost something the pillar with the wealth of his inventiveness. There is a feeling that he was endeavouring to express to outpouring of nature in her most bounteous mood; that tumultuous fertility of tropical growth, but on occasion his exuberance becomes strained so that the palate cloys and the eye tires from such a display of sheer sensuousness'.

No account of the temples of the Osia group would be complete without a reference to the doorways, particularly those which form the entrances to the shrine chamber. In most of the temple architecture, these are the features on which the decorator concentrated all his knowledge and skill, thus corresponding in their wealth of story to the doorways of a Gothic Cathedral in the west. The fact that the shrine entrance led immediately into the divine presence seems to have given wings to the artistic imagination, so that here we find portrayed, by symbol and image whole volumes of folk love and mythology for those who can see but can not read. On the lintel are represented the nine planets or Navagraha, while below are ornamental riches each enshrining some well known incident simulating a key stone is the dedicatory block often depicting a figure or emblem associated with the divinity within the cells, while in panels down the Jambs are figure subjects of lively interest. Decorative mouldings outline the doorway, among which is a motif of double spirals continuing right round the opening deleneating the interwined. Coils of the snake Sesha, the king of the nagas or serpent race, signifying an endless destiny or eternity. The river goddesses of the Ganges and the Jumana figure at the base of the Jamb, to which position they were relegated after the Gupta era; one of the conventions of that period was to include these deities at the upper angle of the doorway, the sixth century marking the date of this change".

An inscription found at Nagari near Chittorgarh dated 481 A.D., reveals the impact of the early Vaishnava temples in Rajasthan. The land of Mewar had been the main moving centre of Vaishnavas as far as Rajasthan is concerned from the 1st to 7th century, where Lord Krishna and Balaram were greatly reveranced by the devotees. The shrines constructed after 7th century could not escape the effect of Tantricism which had begun to mark its impact on the adora-

tion in the Vaishnava temples. According to the Tasai inscription of Alwar, Varuni was also worshipped along with Balaram. The temples of Jagat and Ramgarh of the 10-11th centuries are other examples where Tantricism was put into practice.

The Pratihara period in Rajasthan was notable for construction of the temples adoring the Sun and Siva images. The temples at Bhinmal, Osia, Mandore, Harashnath dedicated to the Sun God are beautiful structural pieces of Rajasthan architecture. The Sungod sculptures also existed at Kiradu, Pokaran and Pali. The present temple of Mother Kali, situated at Chittorgarh is also said to be dedicated to Sungod prior to its conversion. Sun-worship fascinated the builders so much that most of the temples of Rajasthan specially those of the Sirohi State, were dedicated to the Sun god.

The change of deities in the temples depended on builder to builder. During the Pratihara period there was no fixed deity. Some believed in Vaishnavism, others in Saivism. For example, Rambhadra was a fervent devotee of the sun but Mathanadev propagated the worship of Siva. Mewar was studded with Saiva temples, of which, the best known is that of Ekalinga Mahadev, traditionally said to have been first built by Maharawal Bappa. To the south of the Ekalinga temple was a smaller structure of the 10th century and dedicated to Lakulesh. The founder of the Pasupata sect, who came later on to be regarded as an avatara of Siva and was worshipped as such in many localities of Rajasthan. His indentification with Siva is shown iconographically by the Bull emblem on the pedestal of his image found at Arthuna (Banswara District), equally significant is the presence of Lakulesh between Brahma and Visnu in the panel from Badoli. (History of Udaipur). The temple of Samideshwar at Chittorgarh constructed by the Paramara

Ruler Bhoja I and Siva temples at Pushkar and Mandalgarh in Mewar built by Vakpati and Sinha Raja exhibit the impact of the Saivism. Other temples at Bijolia, Menal, Badoli and Nagda dedicated to Siva were probably managed by the Pasupatas. Vappata constructed the shrine of fourpaced Siva at Jhalrapatan. Like Samideshwar and Lakuleshwar, Siva was also worshipped as Ardhanarishwar, representing Siva and Parvati on the same image. Khandela inscription of 645 A. D. mentions the existence of a temple of Ardhanarishwar.

Besides the main deities of Siva, Vishnu and Surya, the temples in Rajasthan were also dedicated to the Goddess Durga associated with Shakti at Jagat, Mandore and Jaipur and Brahma's temple at Pushkar. Dancing Ganesha's images have also been found at Abaneri and Mandore.

The temple architecture was bifurcated into northern and southern styles in the medieval period. Despite their identical base work, the distinctiveness was visible in other parts of the structure. Probably, geographical influence and the methods of worship of the people of the area were responsible for this variation. The temples in Rajasthan were constructed on the northern pattern, though some temples could not escape the influence of the southern architectural style. The construction of shikhara and mandapa of the temples in north differ from southern temples of India. The shape of shikhara was determined by the corbel method of construction and which after attaining the height, limited the span. On top, the amalak binds the whole structure with its weight.

A new direction was propagated in the temple architecture by construction of the temples at Ramgarh and Jagat in the 10-11th centuries. The depiction of amorous scenes could be attributed to the desire to disseminate the sexual

knowledge to the devotees to live happily. To create aversion and detraction from the worldy life might be the other reason for carving out these erotic sculptures. The Siva Shakti cult also dominated the scene. Masons also changed the structural forms and experimented with new patterns by fixing the roughed out blocks first and then giving finishing touches. It brought out beautiful appearance and structural stability to the temples.

The Vastusastra, an interesting work written by Thakur Pheru in 1315 A.D., served as a practical handbook for architecture of the Jain temples in Rajasthan. It enumerated the principles of architecture based on scientific methods which were sincerely followed by the artists of these shrines. Except for differences in the images, installed in the sanctum of the religious edifices of the Hindus and the Jains, the temple architecture of both was substantially identical and more often than not the same artists and architects were being commissioned to build for the patrons of both religions. The Jain temples at Abu constructed in the 11-13th centuries possess distinctive style in north Indian temples. The structure built with white marble from makrana was ornamented with beautiful engraved pillars. Decoration of the walls and pillars was done with scraping and not by clipping. This method has been followed for centuries and later on emulated by Mughal architects also. The Jain temple of Ranakpur is another fine example where building art reached its zenith and excelled in perfection.

The period from 12th to 17th century was mainly occupied with internal rivalries among Rajput princes and clash with formidable Mughals. Under the curcumstrances the rulers and the subjects had hardly any moment to think about the building of beautiful monuments. A great damage was done to the existing temples by the Muslim iconoclasts who were blindly zealous to propagate their own

to give a predominant position to their own architectural style. There is hardly any temple which escaped their destruction. The temples at Chittorgarh, Ranakpur and other parts of Rajasthan are still today, telling the wocful tale of religious vengeance. The temples constructed in this period were devoid of decor and architectural perfection because of uncertainty. In the words of Percy Brown—'During the rule of the Mohammadans, architecture in India passed through three different and more or less successive experiences. The first of these prevailed for only a limited period, but it was one of desecration and destruction inspired by the while heat of fanatical zeal. 'It was the custom' relates a contemporary chronicler', after the conquest of every fort and stronghold to ground its foundations and pillars to powder under the feet of fierce and gigantic elephants. In a like manner a large number of fortified towns were demolished, while temples and similar structures were included in the spoliation. This purely destructive phase was followed by a second one, in which the buildings were not ruthlessly shattered, but were purposely dismantled and the parts removed to supply ready made material for the mosques and tombs of the conquerors. The historian quoted above mentions that much of the demolition was effected by elephant power, these animals being employed to push the beams and pillars out of position, gather them up and carry them to their new situation, much as they now stalk timber, or haul teakwood logs for commercial purposes. It was during the phase that the temple buildings suffered most, as whenever any fresh territory was annexed and the founding of a capital city contemplated, these structures became the quarries from which supplies of cut stone were extracted. This accounts for considerable areas in upper India being almost entirely denuded of any records of Hindu archetecture, notably around such early Islamic centres as Delhi and Ajmer. The spoils of these temples however, had to be supplemented in place by a certain amount of new and

original masonry, as may be seen in mosques of the early type so that the material, were obtained from the source and as tersely described by the chronicler—'the stones were dug out from the hills and the temples of the infidels were demolished to furnish a supply'. Finally there was the third phase, when the Moslims having become firmly established in various parts of the country, found themselves in a position to plan and create building compositions constructed of masonry, not re-conditioned, but each stone prepared specially for its purpose."

Despite uncertain conditions and domination of the Mughals, the temples at Achalgarh, Pipad, Ranakpur and Chittorgarh sprang up in the 14-15th Centuries. A beautiful temple of Jagat Shiromani was built at Amber in the reign of Raja Man Singh, followed by Shiladevi temple to commemorate the victory of Bengal in the 16th century. The image of Shrinath Ji brought from Mathura to avoid destruction at the hands of iconoclasts, was installed at Nathdwara in 1671 by the active help of Rana Raj Singh of Udaipur.

The relegious urge did not diminish despite harassment under Muslim suzerainty. During the British period, the builders of the temple were neither harassed nor encouraged. The temple of Madho Behari in Jaipur was built by the Maharani of Jaipur about 40 years ago. The recent construction of the Sharda temple at Pilani in white marble is a notable contribution of the Birla family in the history of temple architecture in Rajasthan.

KRISHNA THEME IN THE TEMPLES

THE antiquity of the Krishna cult in Indian art is traced back to first century B.C.; of which period the earliest statues of Balaram, the elder brother of Lord Krishna, has been discovered in Mathura. It was worshipped in a temple built on the ruins of the old one. Epigraphic references are also available regarding the existence of religious structures dedicated to Krishna and Balaram at this place, but no contemporary temple of Krishna has been discovered so far. However, we have some sculptures of the Kushana period, depicting the story of Krishna. One of these shows the baby Krishna, carried by Vasudeva across the Yamuna. Another Krishna lifting the mount Goverdhan lies in the Bhartiya Kala Bhawan at Varanasi.

Earliest references to the Krishna cult in Rajasthan are available in the inscriptions of Nagari belonging to the 5th century. Sculptures of the 5th-6th century depicting Krishna legends are also lying in Sardar Museum of Jodhpur. The terracottas of Bikaner of the 2nd-3rd century exhibit the

Krishna legends in all their richness. The Krishna theme has also been depicted in the temple of Osia belonging to the post Gupta period and Kiradu in the 12th - 13th centuries in Rajasthan. From Mewar we have evidence of Krishna worship in the inscription of Aparjita, which opens with a verse invoking the blessings of Hari remembered by the Gopis. The Matsya area has the Chatsu inscription of Baladitya which refers to the episode in which a Gopi obliged to remain away from Krishna, gives up the ghost and thus becomes the first to be united with him. The broken image of the Virat Svarupa of Vishnu from Kannauj to which we have referred above might have been carved by an artist inspired by Krishna's discourse in the Eleventh Chapter of the Bhagvad Gita. The Kaman (Bharatpur area) has provided Krishnite epigraphs as well as images. The scenes of Osia (Jodhpur Division) include Vasudeva with the baby Krishna on his head, Krishna Yashoda, Sakatabhanga, murder of Putana, Kaliya daman, Goverdhan Dharna, stealing butter etc. (Rajasthan through the Ages).

Mathura and Brindaban, the land of Krishna's infancy and boyhood are sanctified in holy shrines. The forms or swaroopas of lord Krishna, which were discovered by the immediate disciples of Chaitnya and Ballabha Charya were consecrated here and as much, are held in the highest veneration by the followers of the respective sects of Vaishanavas. The bigotry of Muslims compelled the custodian of the sacred idols to escape and migrate to faraway places. They were readily welcomed by the rulers of Jaipur and Mewar. The Shrine of Shrinath Ji at Nathdwara and the temple of Govind-Deva at Jaipur are the results of this migration.

According to a legend, Govind Deva appeared in dream before Roop Goswami of Bengal and enjoined upon him to dig the idol out of the ground. The unearthed idol assumed, such significance and devotional celebrity that

a majestic temple of Lord Krishna were erected by Raja Man Singh of Jaipur in Brindaban in 1590 A.D. This was the result of the Raja Man's faith and devotion cultivated by him during his stay in Bengal as governor of the province. Chaitnya himself evinced great interest in the temple and sent his personal god Gaur Govind to be consecrated and worshipped along with Govind Deva. The construction of the Jagat Shiromani temple at Amber by Raja Man Singh is another proof of the growing popularity of the Krishna cult.

The magic effect of the flute played by Krishna was so thrilling that it not only mesmerised the Gopikas around him, but gave new directions to the artists of the 16th and 17th centuries. The paintings in the temples at Pushkar, Jaipur, Mewar and other parts of Rajasthan stand testimony to this.

The depiction of the birth of Krishna, escape of Vasudeva, Nagnathan, Sudama-Krishna episode, killing of Kansa, lifting of Goverdhan and discourse with Arjun, etc., were the themes for the poets and painters who executed them in verse and in pictures and thus immortalised their works almost in all the capital cities of Rajasthan.

The Geet Govind of Jaideva gave new ideas and inspiration to the builders of the temple and Raslila scenes were invariably depicted on the ceilings of the temples in the 17th and 18th centuries. These scenes had a profound effect on society. While some were inspired to devotional ecstasy, others drew a new meaning from them on the relationship of man and woman with a view to achieving the maximum pleasures of life. Though the feeling of love was hidden behind the depiction, the scenes of Krishna dancing with Gopikas, taking bath and such other scenes prompted the people, especially the higher classes, to sensual pleasures.

Interpreting the Raslila scenes, Rukmani Devi explains, 'The supreme life dances. From it rediates the essence of all sound holding within itself the potency of all possible articulation to the accompaniment of the thunder of this music, He dances. The cosmic rhythm of his dance draws around him ensouled matter which is differentiated into the infinite variety of this beautiful universe. Sri Krishna, the Parmatama, dances in Brindaban and the Gopis dance around him in the Rasa. In the rhythm of the dance each Gopi discovers Shri Krishna for herself. The Jiva knows again the Supreme fount of life from which it originated.'

The Krishna theme was predominant in the wall and miniature paintings. It marked a departure from the early Jain paintings. Krishna was venerated both by the Rajput rulers and their subjects. Windows, walls and ceilings are ornamented with Krishna legends. Rajput School of paintings e.g. Mewar, Kishangarh, Jaipur, Alwar, Marwar and Bundi drew much inspiration from this devotional fount of Krishna Lila.

The Rajput princess and poetess, Mirabai, adored Krishna as Girdhar Gopal. A temple adjoining the Kumbh-shayam shrine in Chittorgarh was constructed by her father-in-law, Rana Kumbha, where Mira is said to have sung her devotional songs. Like Chaitanya and Narsinha Mehta, Mira was a mystic lover. She imagined herself as the bride of Krishna and loved him with all the ardour at her command. She was one of the few souls in the entire range of human history, in whom sublimation of the sex element and its transmutation into mysticism were seen in their noblest form. She spoke of Krishna, as Girdhar, the holder of the mount. This form of Krishna seems to appeal to her most as in this form, he manifests himself both as the lord and the protector of his devotees.

"The sports of Radha and Krishna were perfected as the arch-type of love symbolism in all its nuances imbued with hot passion and the fire of the Indian world and the Indian sky. But always true—its spiritual background and being vitalised by it. Radha as the human soul passes through all experiences in her quest for union with the divine purusha symbolised by Krishna". As Dr. Coomaraswamy interprets it, "In the Vaishnava devotional approach and its poetry, human love is considered as the means and symbol of all union. Lovers represented are always Radha and Krishna, typifying the eternal motif of man and woman and revealing in every day events their heavenly image. The whole land of Radha and Krishna is the land of our own experiences where beauty and love are sublimated and transformed into the purest divine experience of the heart of the human soul."

EROTIC SCULPTURES

KHAJURAHO, Konarak, Ramgarh and Ranakpur are some places of religious importance which embarrass some visitors by their erotic sculptures. One really wonders, why these temples bear such varied postures of sexual union? It is not unusual to find a western beholder standing aghast at the sight of such erotic sculpture which has no place in the Christian church. A foreigner suddenly finds himself confronted with the sacred principles of Suchita on the one hand and such frank sexual representations on the other. But there are references in the Hindu mythology to the effect that the creation of universe is based upon the consummation of the male and the female. An open representation of this sexual union may stand as a symbol of degeneration or licensiousness but it also signifies the happy and cherished experiences of a natural course of life. The coital secenes in Jain temples are meant to lead one towards alienation from society, i.e. vairagya, and not to stick to the sensual life. The concept of representation may even turn people's minds towards constructive channels by not indulging in the sexual tendencies of life.

Whatever may be the origin of erotic sculpture, it is certain that these marvels in stone were the products of sublime inspiration. There can be no two opinions that philosphy and religion were the base of these exquisite pieces of sculpture. It would be unjust to consider them as patterns of sex behaviour, representing the moral and social degradation of the age. These temples were dedicated to the discovery of truth and beauty. In fact, the coital scenes are meant as a catharsis to the worshippers.

Vastsyayan's 'Kama-Sutra' written in the 4th century A.D., unfolds a vivid narration of various aspects of love making. The 'Rati-Rahasya' by Kokola in the 13th Century and 'Anangrang' by Kalyanmal in the 16th Century, further elaborated the various details about sex and eroticism. Besides describing in detail the gradual step and the point of satiety in the sexual process, these works reflect the themes of love in the shade of amoral decoration. Man and woman are the two components of physical consummation and bliss. The sexual urge of a woman works as scorpion's sting to a man's passions and they unite together to taste the supreme joy which is akin to the bliss of the soul. This very representation has been made in the form of idols, such as Yaksha-Yakshini and Gods and Goddesses in the temples.

The amorous nayikas, the perennial source of bringing pleasure and ardent affection, have been classified as Kanya, Punurbhu and Vaishya where as Rati-Rahsya, Anangrang and Panchsayak name them as Padmini, Chitarini, Shankhini and Hastini, etc. The idol makers endeavoured to bring their characteristics in sculptures and to some extent they also succeeded. The stone images of dancers carved in the temples of Ajanta, Khajuraho, Ranakpur, Delwada and Tanjore are fine examples of their artistic skill. The expressions, eyebrows, lips, hairs, waists and legs of the women create an aphredisiac atmosphere and attract notice of the visitors.

One finds difficulty in understanding the less protruded sculptures pertaining to physical love. Craftsmen have maintained their limitations in the Kandirya Mahadev Temple at Khajuraho and Bhanddevra temple in Ramgarh near Kota. At some places woman is shown held by two apsaras and a man in oblique position. His hands lying on the waists of apsaras indicate the deriving of the pleasure. According to Fouchet "The Hindu artist, as we have seen, was bound by strict rules and codes when interpreting the higher orders of being, but clearly regains his freedom when he describes or invents—mankind's sensual delights. We drop then from the loftiest regions of symbolism. The realism of every day life emerges, zest is shown and sometimes there are touches of fun. When gods are left behind and mortals re-appear, art becomes simpler, freer, gains in spontaneity what it loses in hieratic calm. Life swarms. We are down to the level of the teeming market places of India. If the body is clothed in formal perfection in Hindu art. This does not deny its spirituality. For it is within this frame, this housing that release must be sought. This is the place where the manifold merges with the one, where the essential seen is absorbed in the unseen, where the separate self unites with the essential self. The fleshy body proclaims the beauty of the mystic essential body. It is the ultimate flowering of the primal germ. The artist expresses this praise by deformation. Women legs are elongated, hips and buttocks enlarged to emphasize the slenderness of the waist. The breasts have no droop, scorning gravity's law. They are spheres, self enclosed worlds, attached directly sometimes to the torso, but sprang straight from it, or rather as if the prints of some orchard never spoiled by the hands of time were grafted on to flesh to assuage man's hunger and thirst and renew them endlessly. Of Parvati it is said 'She bent under the weight of these twin globes, like a fruit tree heavily laden.' Grace and passion: a present promise, cruel, tender apsaras. Visions breathed by the divine."

An infusion of different principles, exhibited in amorous embrace and coitus is symbolic of divine union. Has there been any idea behind this eroticism? As Stella Kramrisch puts it: 'Man's seperation from God and the world of dichotomy in which he lives result from the bi-sexual polarity in divinity, and from the subsequent externalisation of the conscious Siva as the object of his own self enjoyment. In order to regain the primordial wholeness (Brahmajnan) the yogin practices bodily, mental and intellectual exercise and the devotee (Sadhaka) observes the rites as his means of accomplishing (Sadhana) final release. In such exercise (Yoga) there is coupling (Maithun) of the active and the changeless principles.'

"Gods and ascetics therefore should be represented in their love sport (Krida-lila) on the walls of temples but ascetics practising the game of love should not figure on the habitations of men for their game is none of the three purposes of life. It is a symbol of final release its fourth and ultimate purpose."

Percy Brown has pointed out the erotic scenes in the temples, as examples of the degenerated society of the time. But this is his guess work and it finds no proof even in the eroctic sculptures of Khajuraho. The sphere of coupling scenes is limited in the temple of Konarak where as in Khajuraho these scenes exist despite the predominance of Siva. The Jain and Vaishnava art is also noticeable. Therefore, the love scenes are imbued with religious fervour and indicate the sanctity of the shrines. The amorous sculptures in the temples of Delwada, Ranakpur, Jagdishji and Eklingji in Rajasthan are other fine examples.

The art which developed in the Gupta period reached its zenith in the post-Gupta period. The temple group of osia is a fine specimen of that age. These temples can be

said to be pioneers in the exhibition of sex sculptures in their perfection. The artistic skill of masons chiseled lovely images, which attract the notice of every visitor. The Krishna theme of divine pleasure must have been in the background while the sculptures were being carved out. This incorporation also shows the decay of the Brahamanic cult in art. Religion began to come closer to the people. The Hindu and the Jain structures sprang together in the 10-12th century.

The Jagat temple in Mewar and the Ramgarh temple in Kotah were alike the pattern adopted in Khajuraho temples. Siva Shakti cult also dominated the scene. The association of the fish with varah in the Jagat temple might be due to the influence of some Tantric tradition of this cult. Structural form also underwent a change and now builders began to fix the roughed out blocks first and then to give finishing touches.

New directions were derived from the propagation of love theory by 'Geet Govind' of Jaideva. People began to realise that there exists no degeneration or corruption if it is based on love and happiness. Sexual relationship was harmful only when they precipitated jealousies, mutual clashes and troubles. Narsingh Dev of Orissa was greatly impressed by this as is evident in the magnificent temple at Konarak. It was dedicated to Sungod, as being the fulfiller of all desires. In Rajasthan, the temples of Mandore, Osia, Harshnath and Bhinmal come under this category. While exhibiting the amorous sculptures of Radha and Krishna the craftsmen tried to bring sanctity and religious fervour.

Thus the depiction of amorous scenes in the temples could be attributed to the desire to disseminate sexual knowledge to the devotees to help them to lead more happy. life. The other contention that these sculptures were meant to detract the attention of the individuals from this life and to enable them to concentrate on devotion may also be partly

true. In his book 'The Art of Indian Asia', Professor Zimmer explains the motive behind these representations as, "such living forms are suggested to the Indian artist by a dynamic philosophy that is intrinsic to his relegious and philosophical tradition; for the worship of the life-force pouring into the universe and maintaining it, manifesting itself no less in the gross matter of daily experience than in the divine beings of religious vision, constitutes the very foundation of Indian religious life. According to this doctrine, which was particularly influential in the great periods of Indian art, release from the bondage of our normal human imperfection can be gained not only through the world-negating methods of asceticism (yoga) but equally through a perfect realization of love and its sensual enjoyment (bhoga). According to this view, which has been eloquently expressed in the so called tantric symbols and rituals of both the Hindu and the Buddhist traditions, there is intrinsically, no antagonism between yoga and bhoga. The role played by the guru, the spiritual guide and teacher, in the stern masculine disciplines of yoga is taken over in the initiations of bhoga by the devout and sensual female help mate. The initiating woman plays the part of Shakti while the male initiate assumes that of Siva, and both attain together to a realization of the immanence within themselves of the consubstantiality of the Goddess and the God."

Whatever has been said or can be said, the basic fact remains that as long as man is ambitious and society exists, the sex problem will remain. Forms may change according to passing tastes of the society but fundamental things will exist as they are. The present day amorous and nude paintings and terrakotas are symbolic of such feelings and expressions. So long as the theme of 'me' and 'mine' prevails, there will be a sex problem, which will provoke depiction through the fingers of artists and craftsmen.

LIST OF PLATES

1. *Dedicated to Vishnu, the Kumbshayam temple is one of the oldest structures in Chittorgarh. It was renovated in 15th century.*
2. *A general view of the temples and Jai-Stambh in Chittorgarh fort. They were constructed in different phases from 8th to 17th century* A.D. *Jaistambh or Victory tower was erected by Maharana Kumbha in commemoration of his victory over Malwa in 1448* A.D.
3. *Satbis Devri temple at Chittorgarh.*
4. *Temple of Kalikamata at Chittorgarh, was built in 8th century. Originally it was dedicated to Surya, but later on converted to Shakti temple.*
5. *The shrine of Mira Bai. She is remembered as a great devotee of Krishna.*
6. *The temple of Lord Sammidheswar, constructed in 12th century, is famous for Lord Siva's image and ornamental carvings on the outer walls.*
7. *The temple of Adbhutnath, Chittorgarh.*
8. *Kirtistambh and a Jain temple at Chittorgarh.*
9. *A panel from the Jain temple, Chittorgarh.*
10. *Trimurti in Sammidheswar temple, Chittorgarh.*
11. *Sun worshipping. A sculpture from Kota group.*
12. *A view of the Badoli temple built in 8th century, is dedicated to Lord Siva, whose emblems are visible everywhere.*

13. *Lord Vishnu in a relaxed mood, Badoli, 8th century* A.D.

14. *Image of Vishnu encarved on the outer walls.*

15. *Foot prints of Sant Raidass, spiritual teacher of Mira Bai at Chittorgarh.*

16. *Sivalingam in a temple at Kumbhalgarh.*

17. *Shikharas of the temple of Ekling Ji, were constructed in the 8th century by Bapa Rawal, founder of the Mewar dynasty. It was destroyed by the invaders, but, rebuilt by Raimal in 1488* A.D.

18. *Torana of the Sasbahu temple at Nagda near Udaipur now in ruins. Many Images plunged in a pond are speaking of the grandeur of this temple.*

19. *A view of the temples, Kumbhalgarh.*

20. *A lady with a child encarved in a temple.*

21. *A general view of the temples at Nagada which are now in a dilapidated condition.*

22. *Jagdish temple, Udaipur. It was built by Maharana Jagat Singh I in the 17th century at the cost of rupees fifteen lakhs.*

23. *A woman with a mirror.*

24. *Details of the pillars in the Jagdish temple. The sculptures carved on the walls are fine pieces of art.*

25. *A group of temples at Kesaria Ji. These famous sacred Jain Temples are dedicated to the worship of Lord Adinath. Image of the lord in black stone was brought from Gujerat in 13th century. Bhil community also worship the God as Kala Ji. It is also known as the temple of Kala Ji.*

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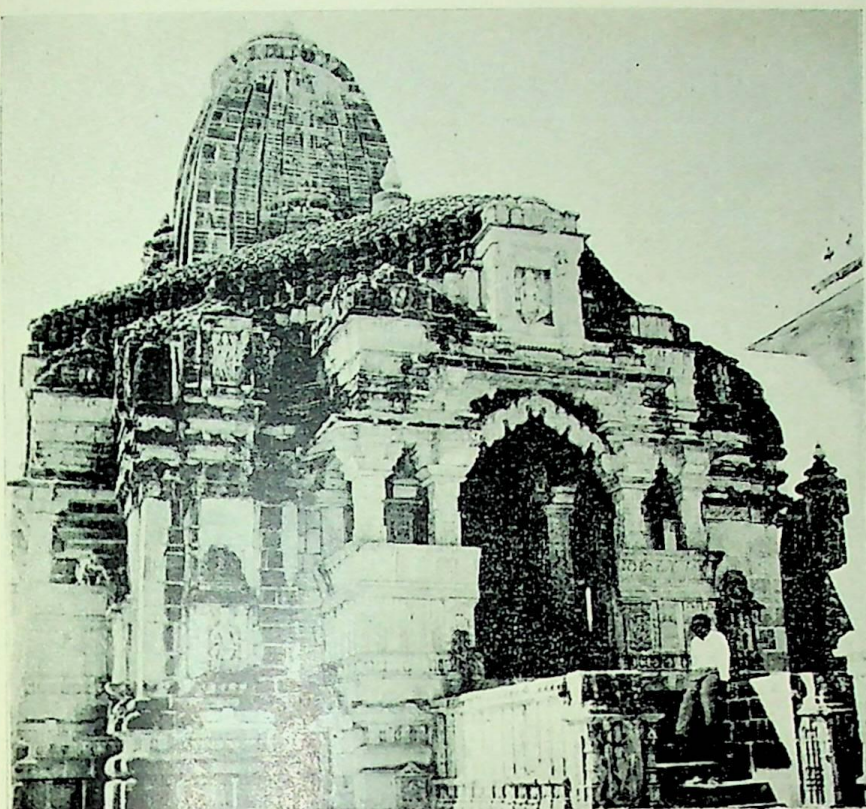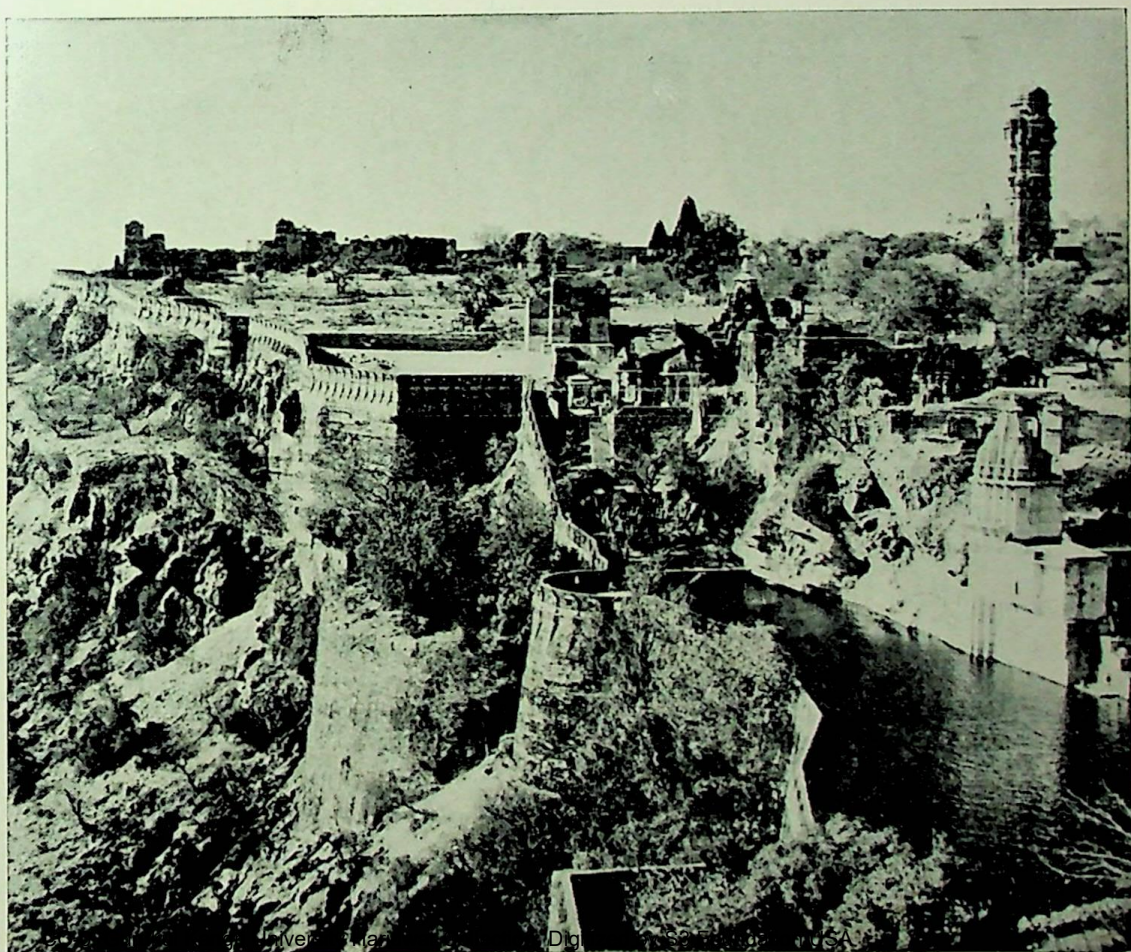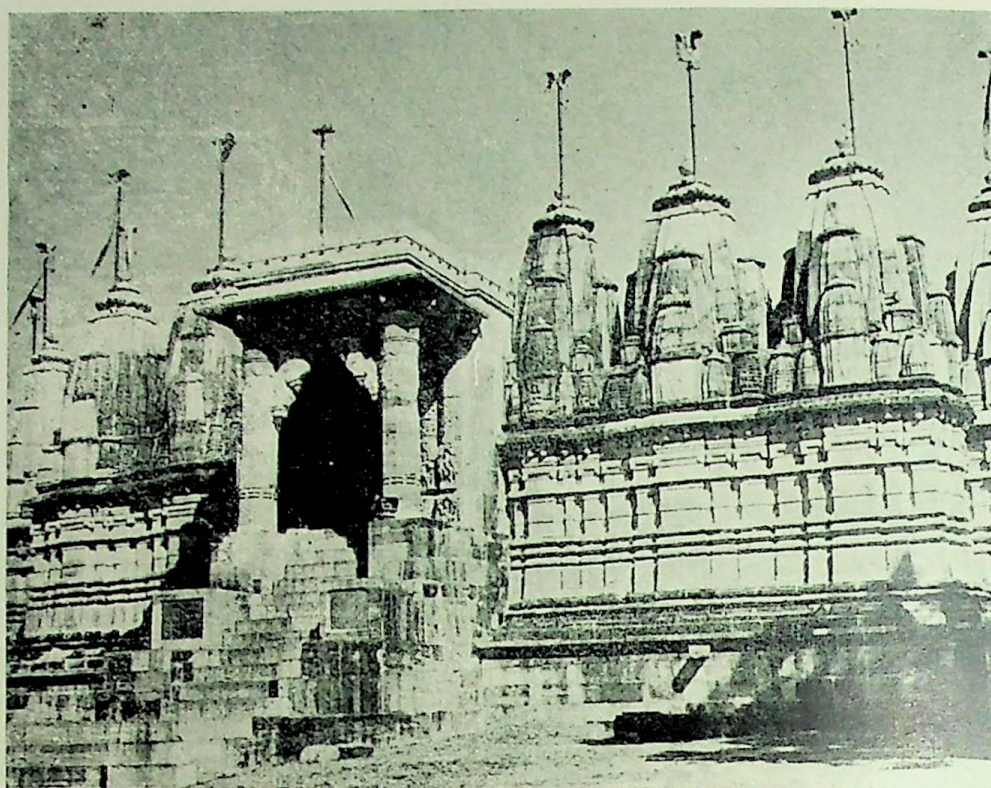
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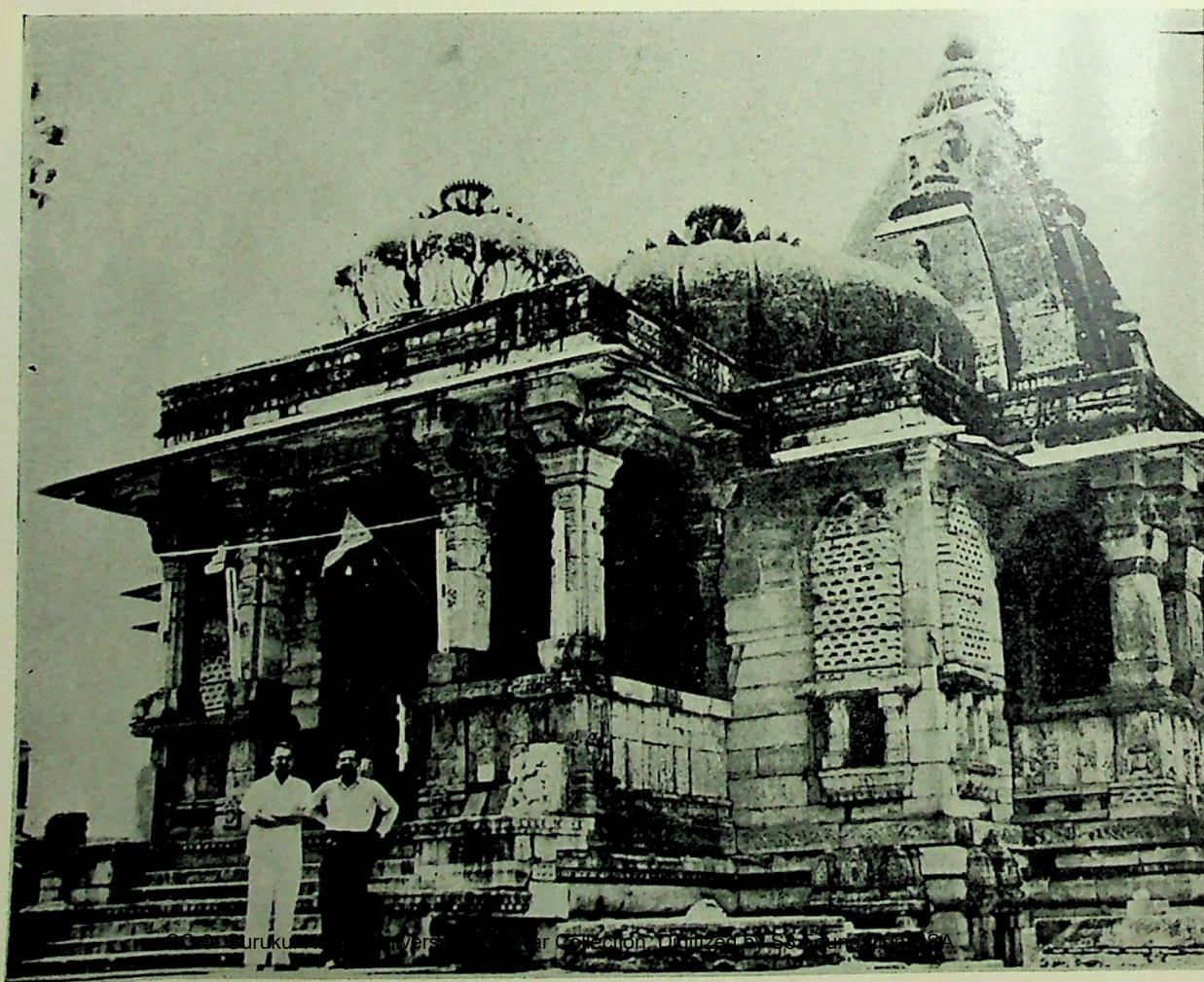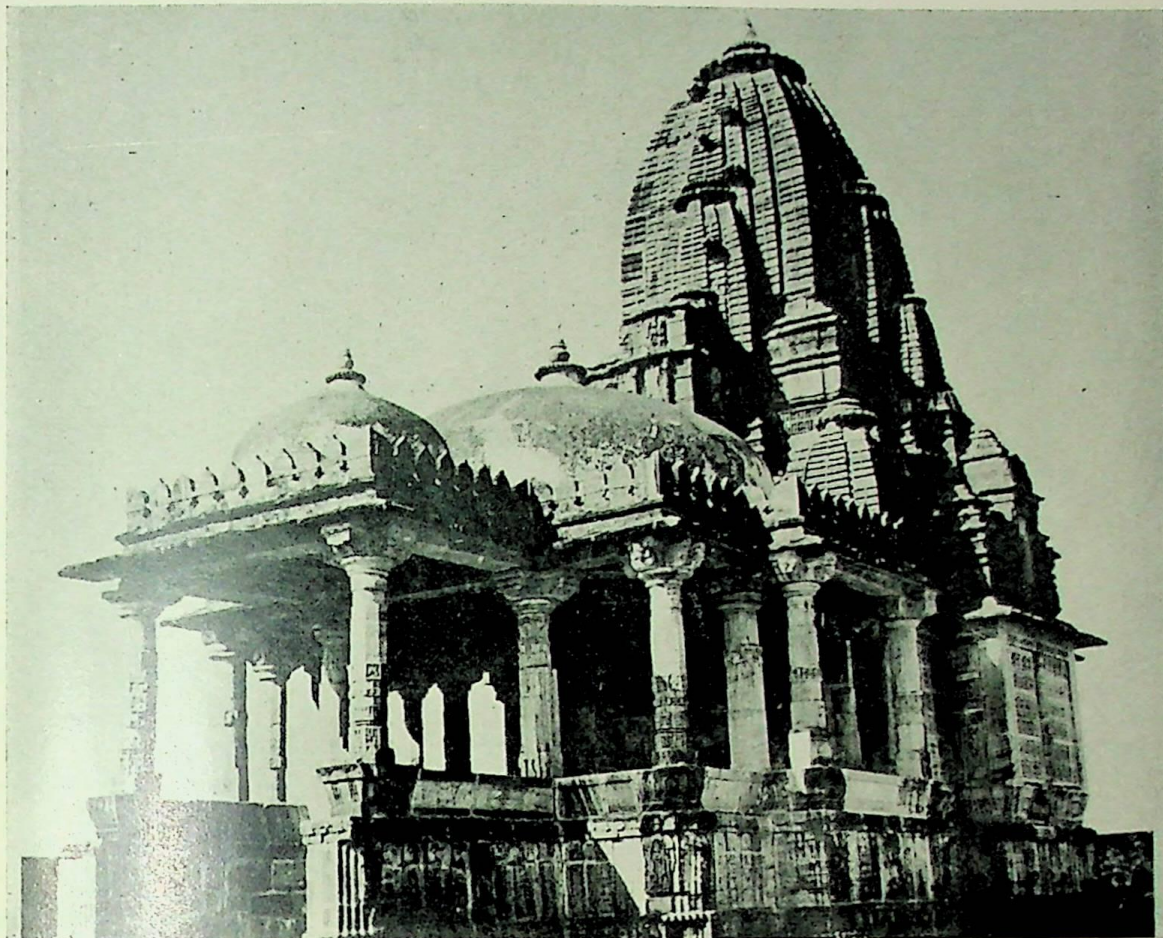
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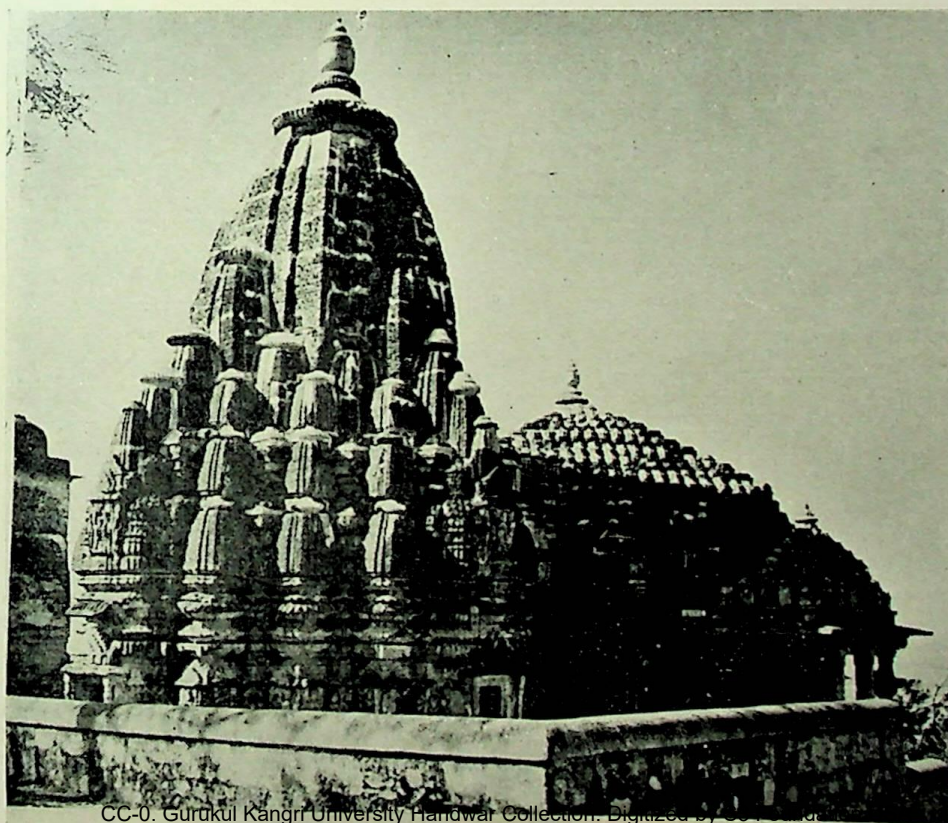
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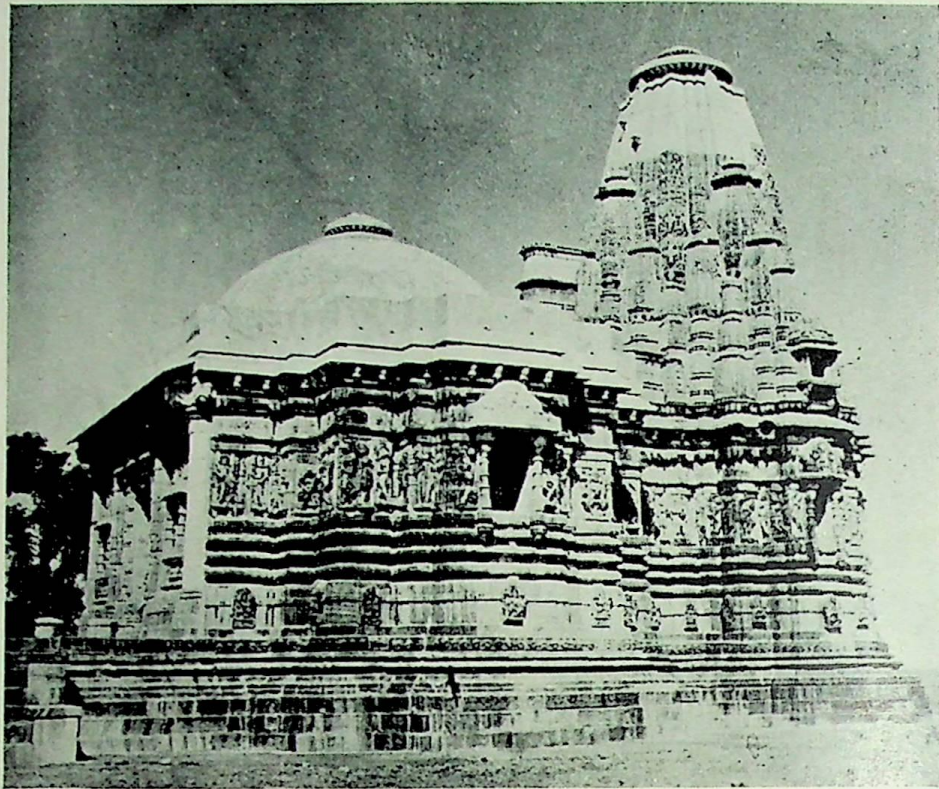
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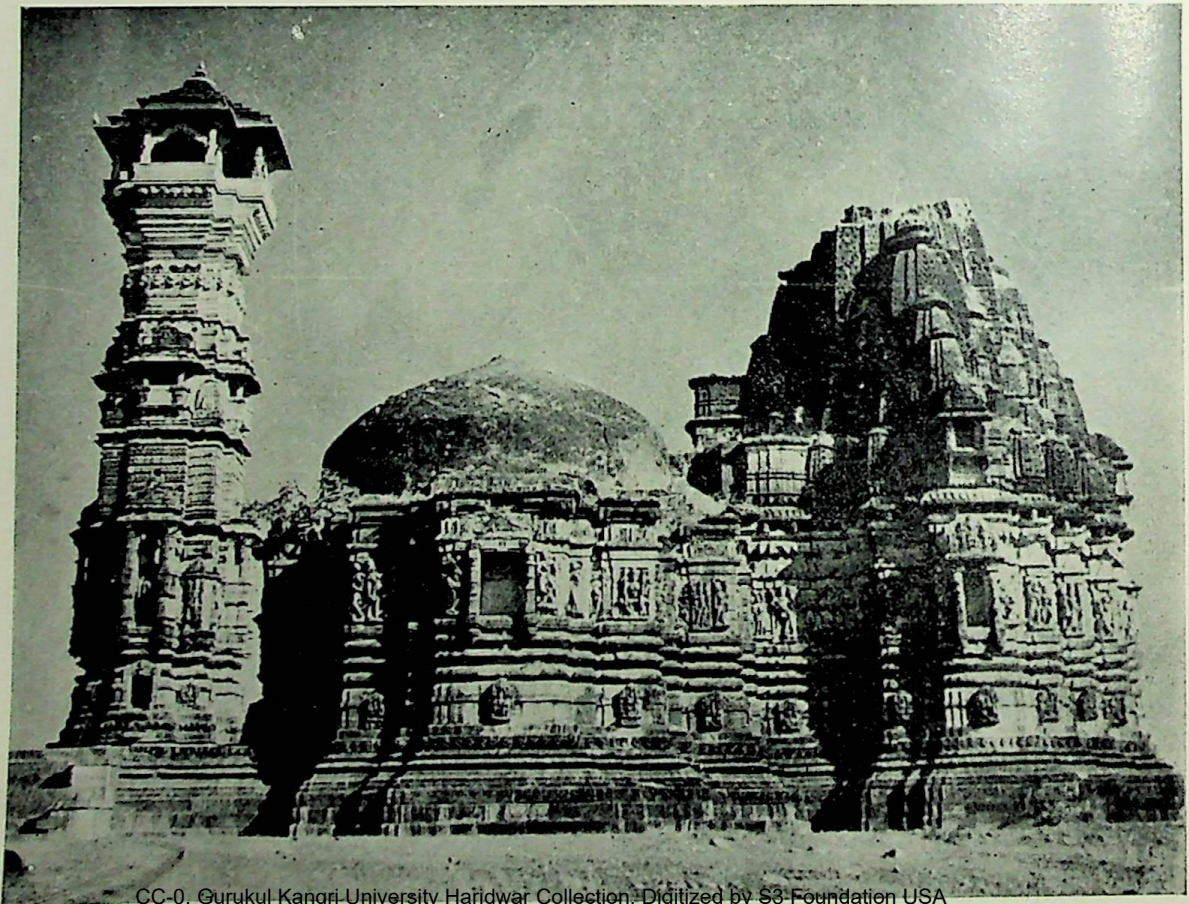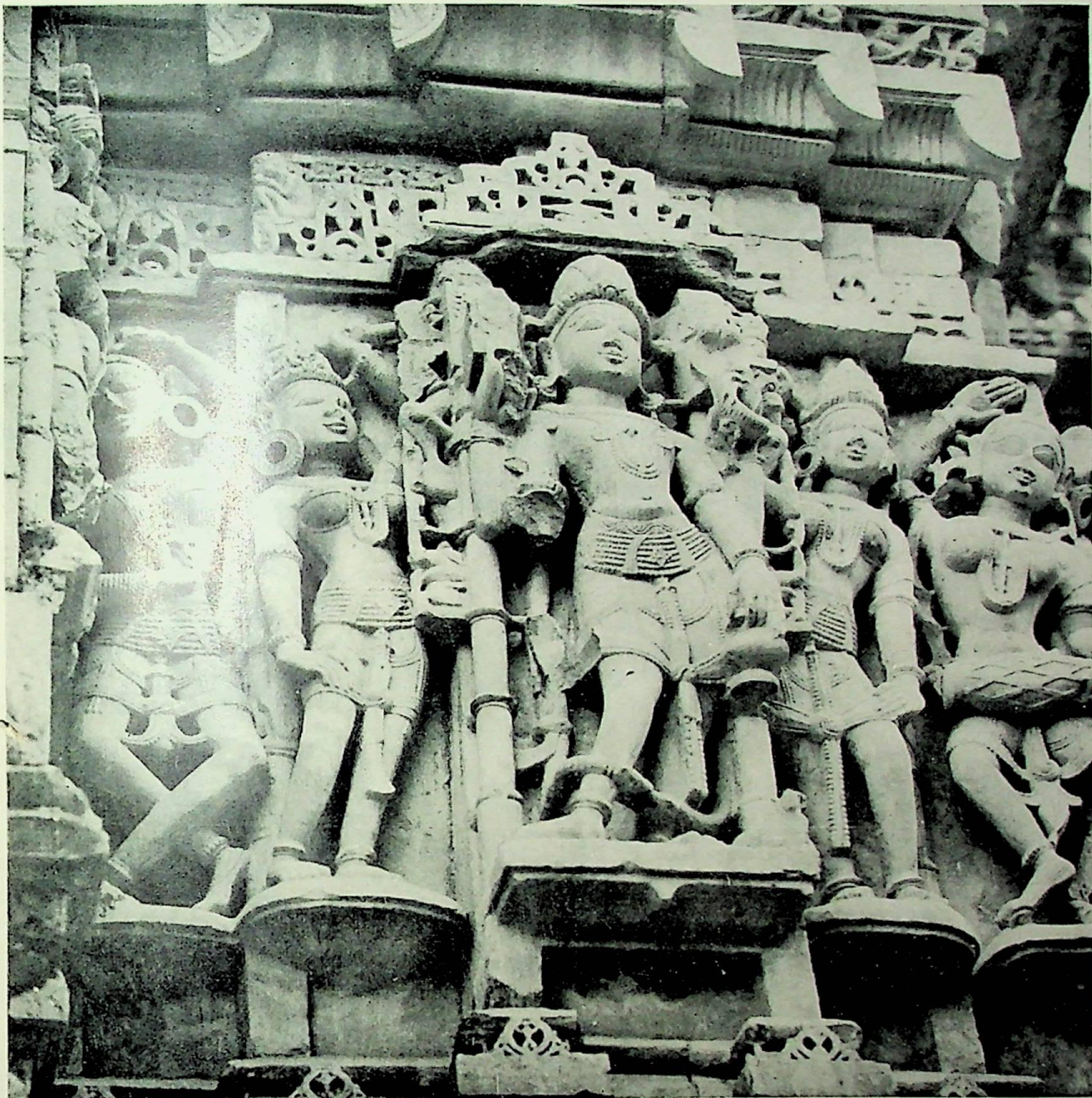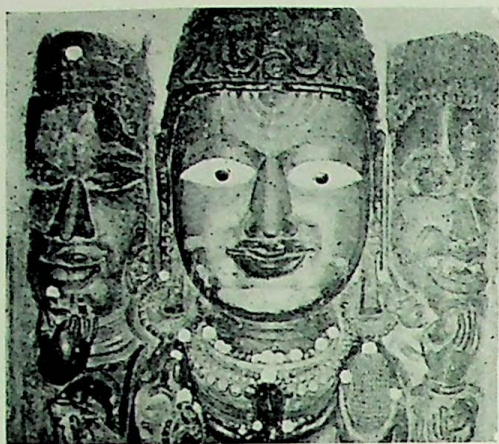
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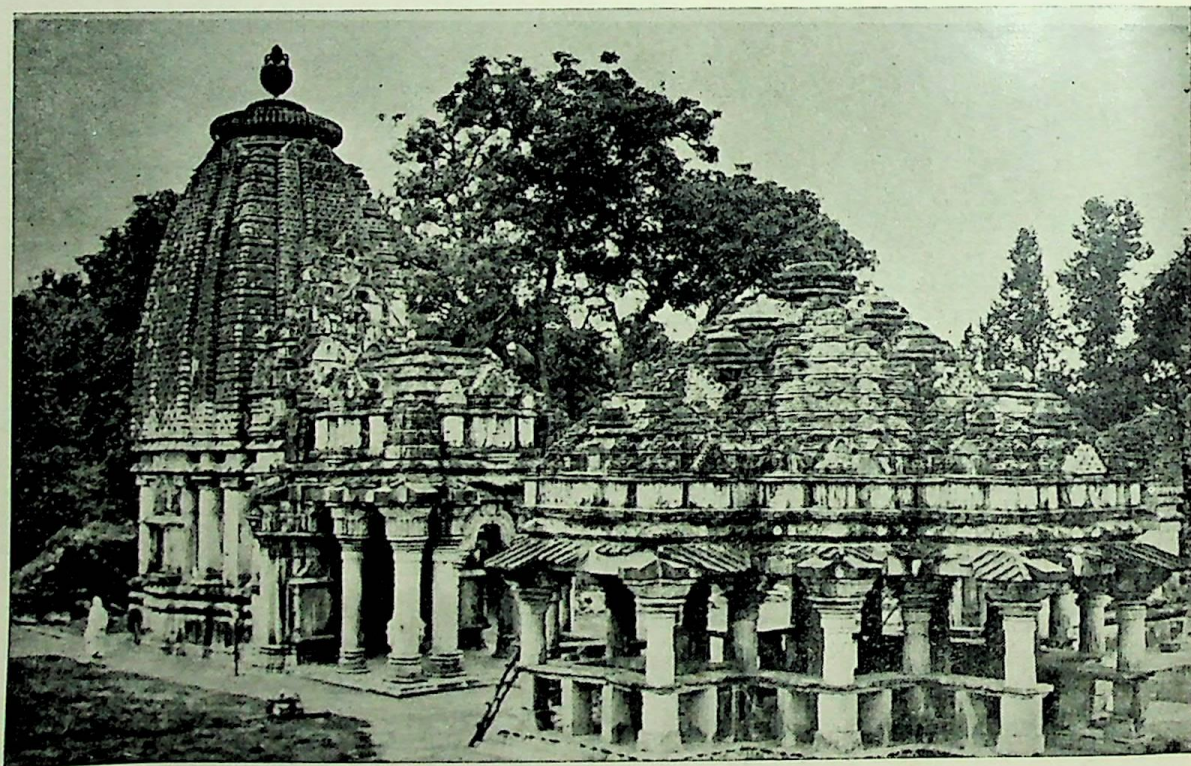
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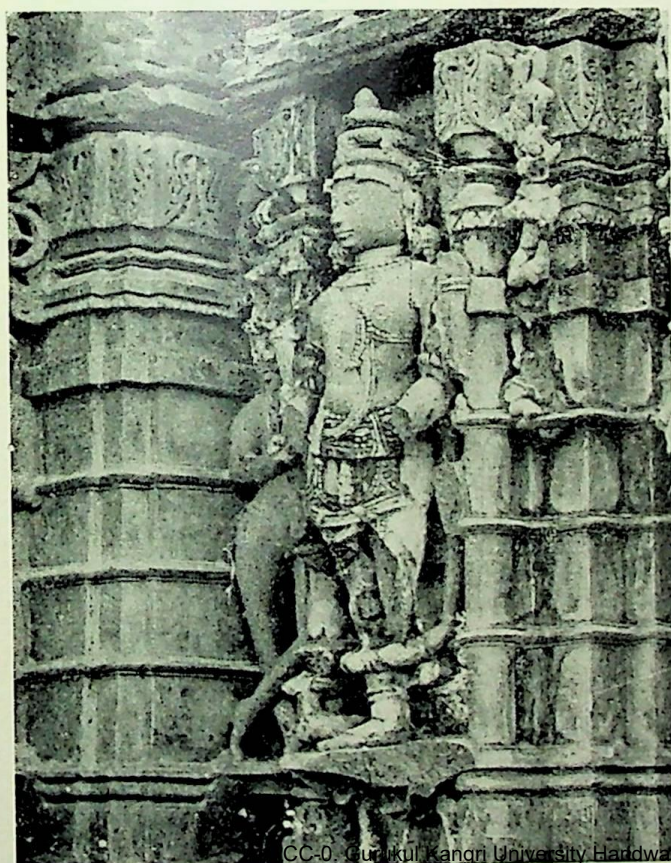
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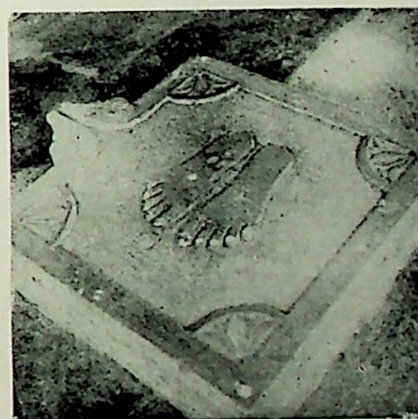
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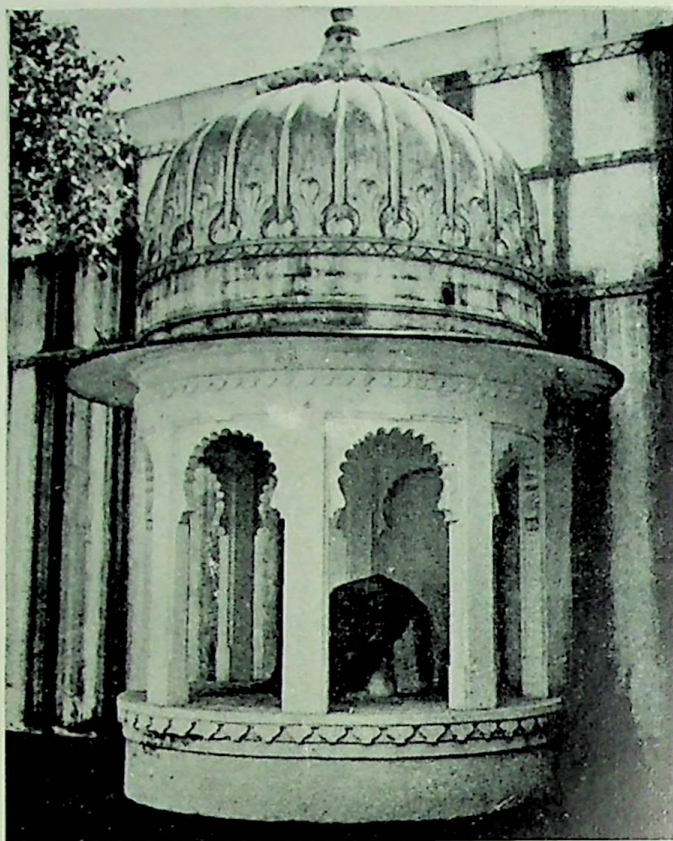
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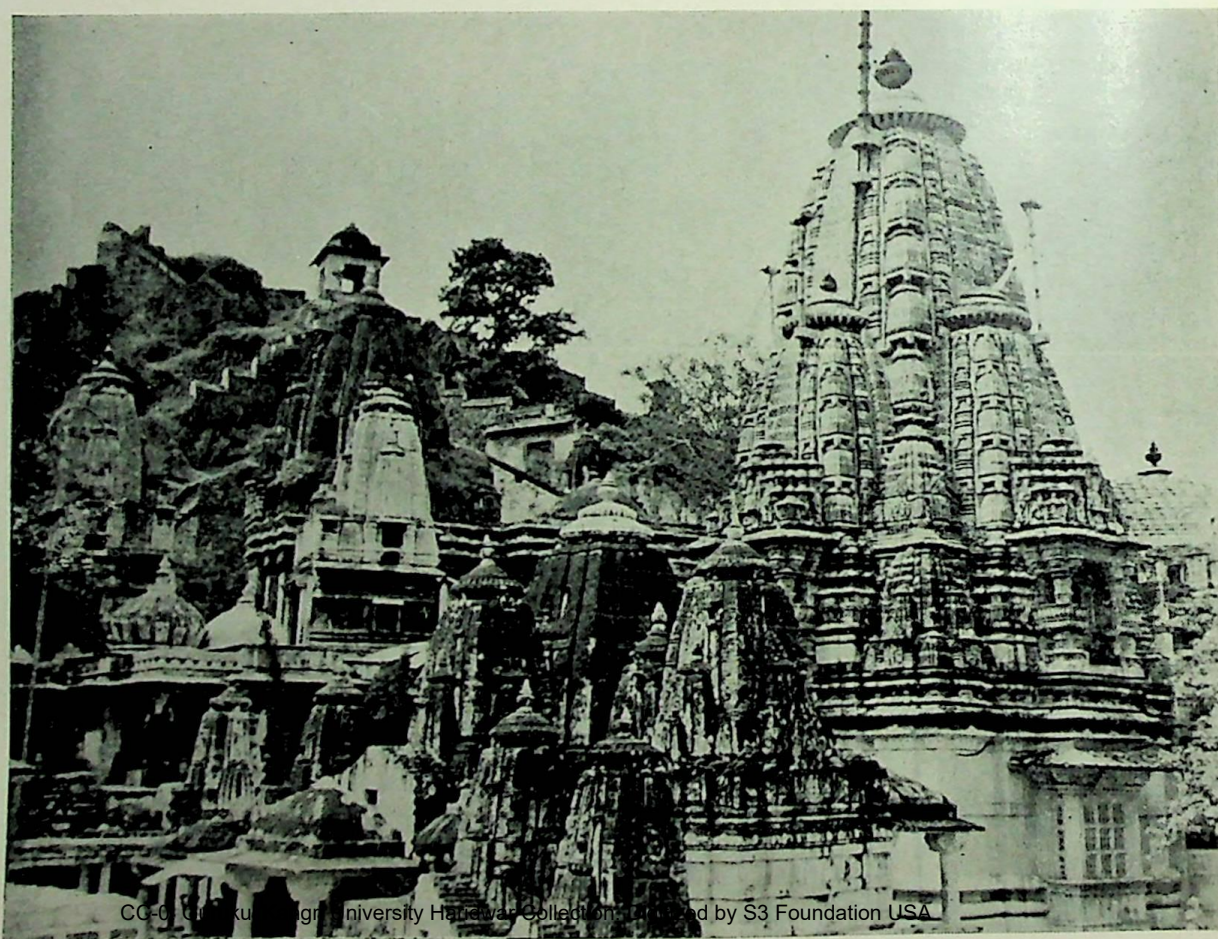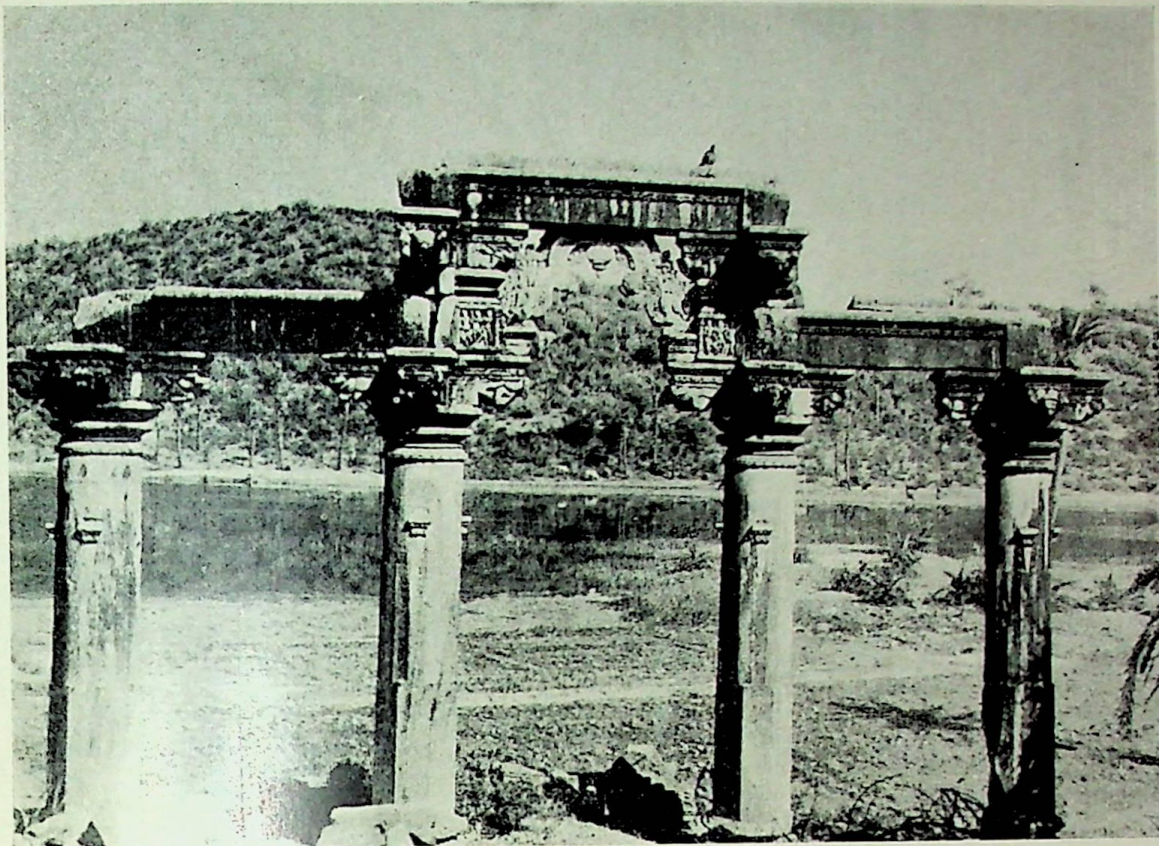
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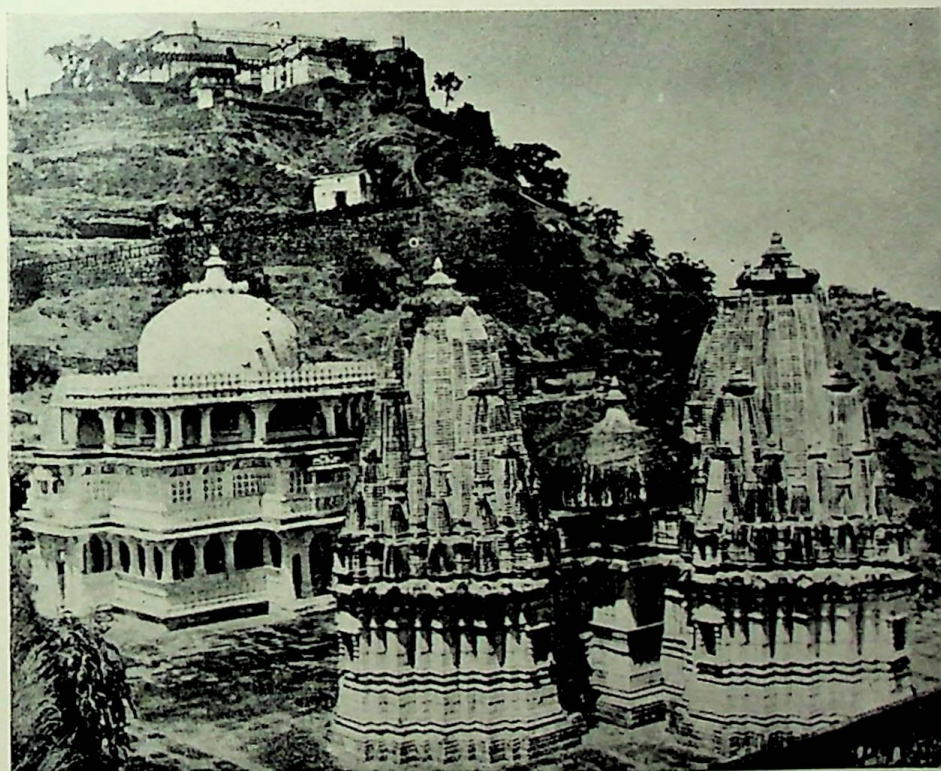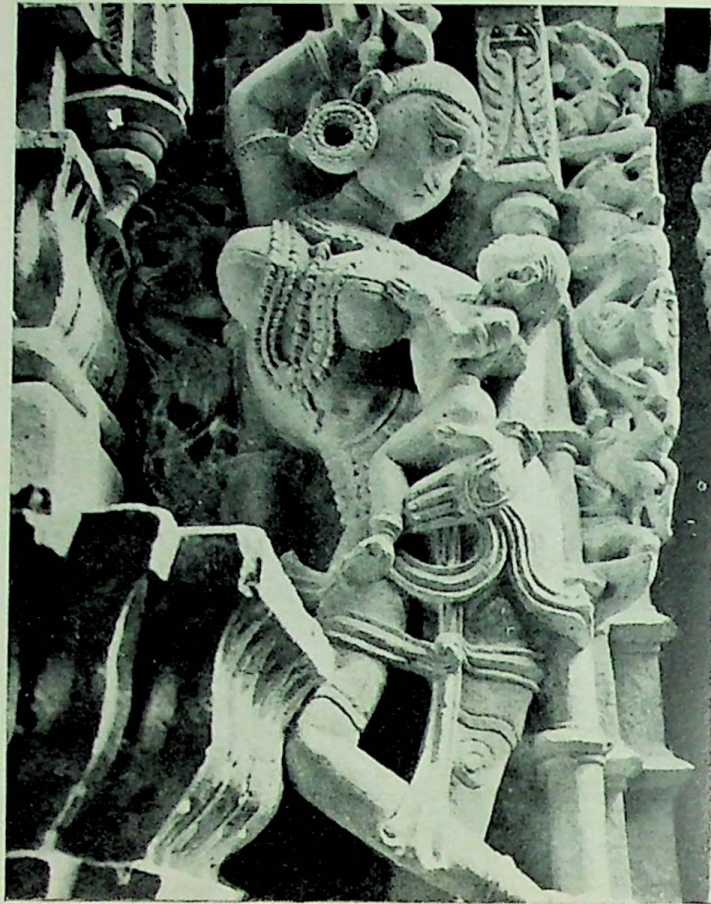
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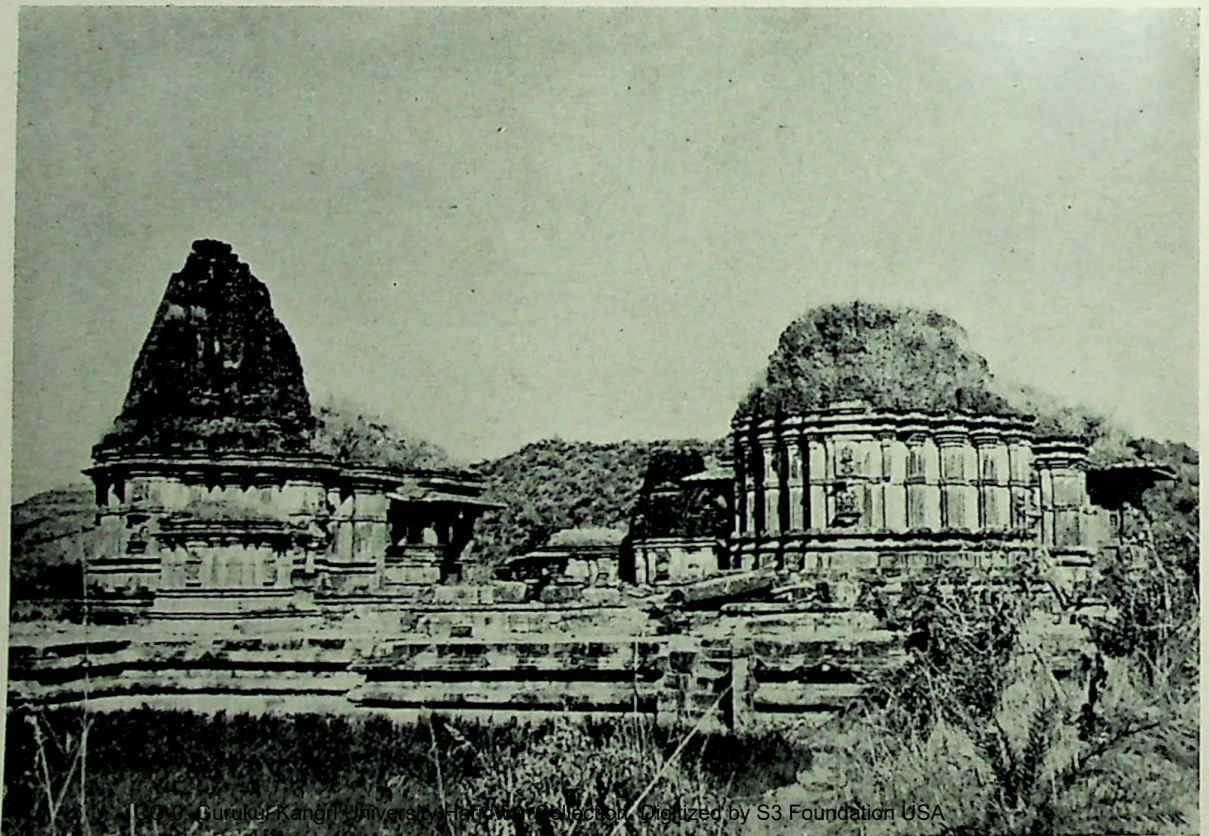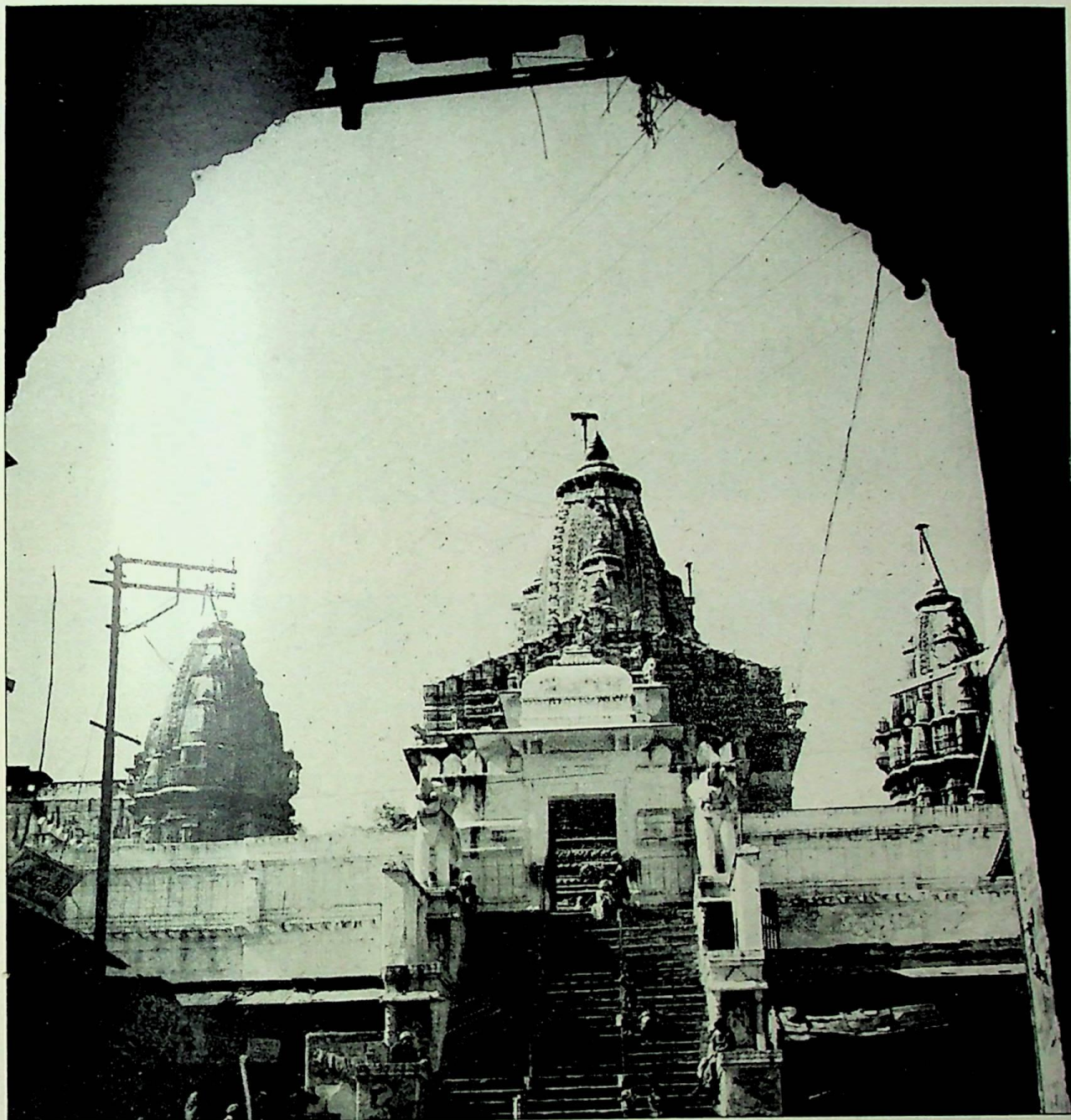
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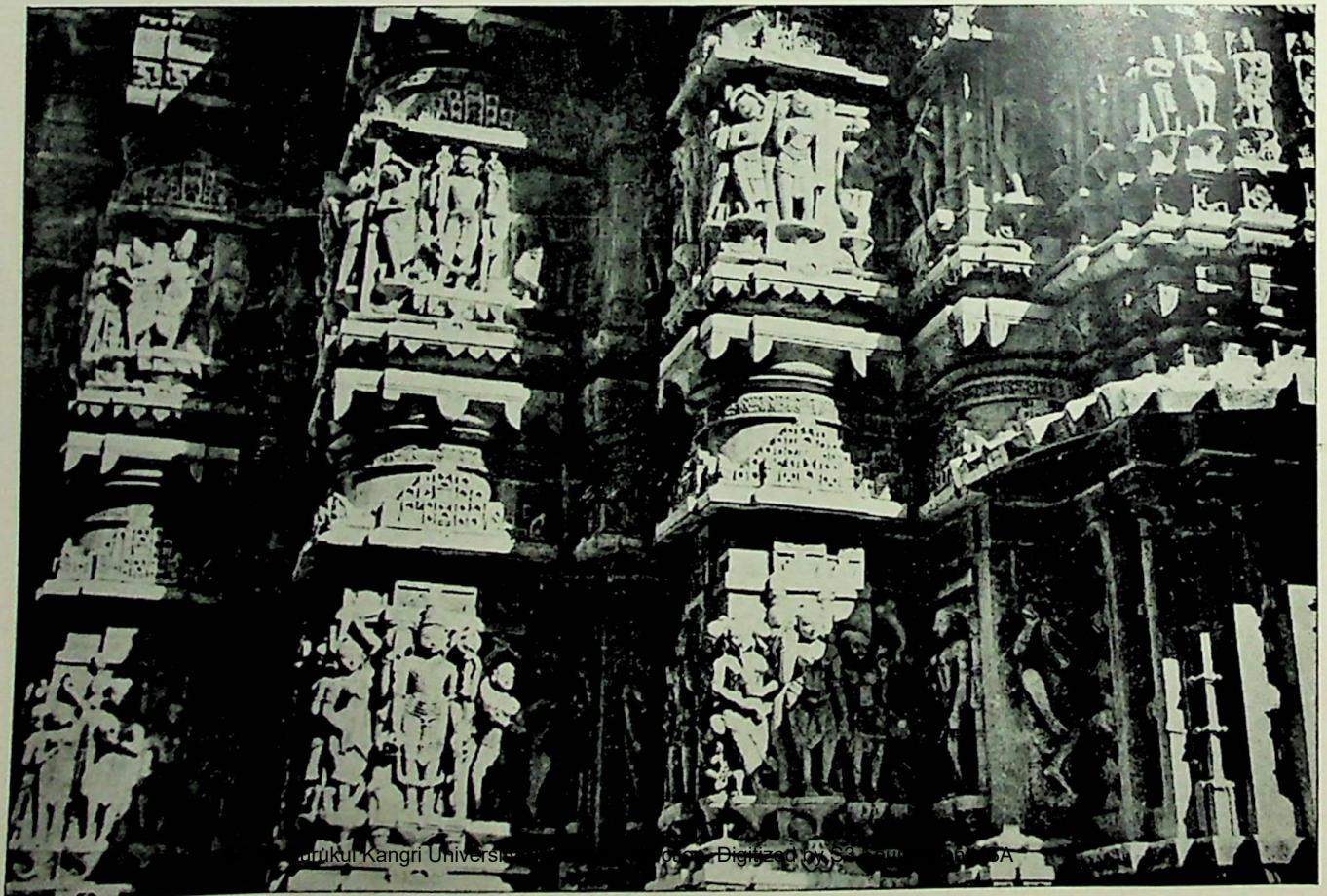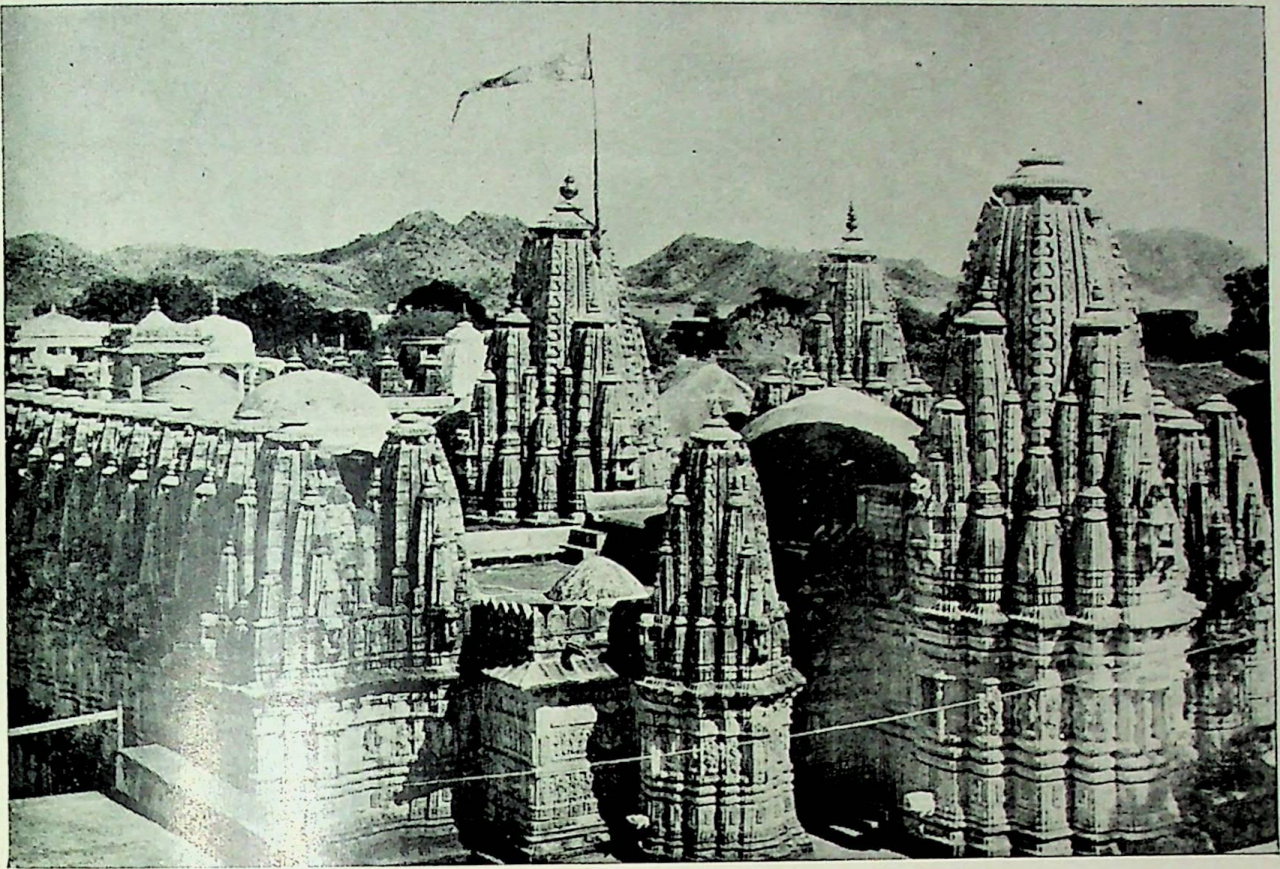
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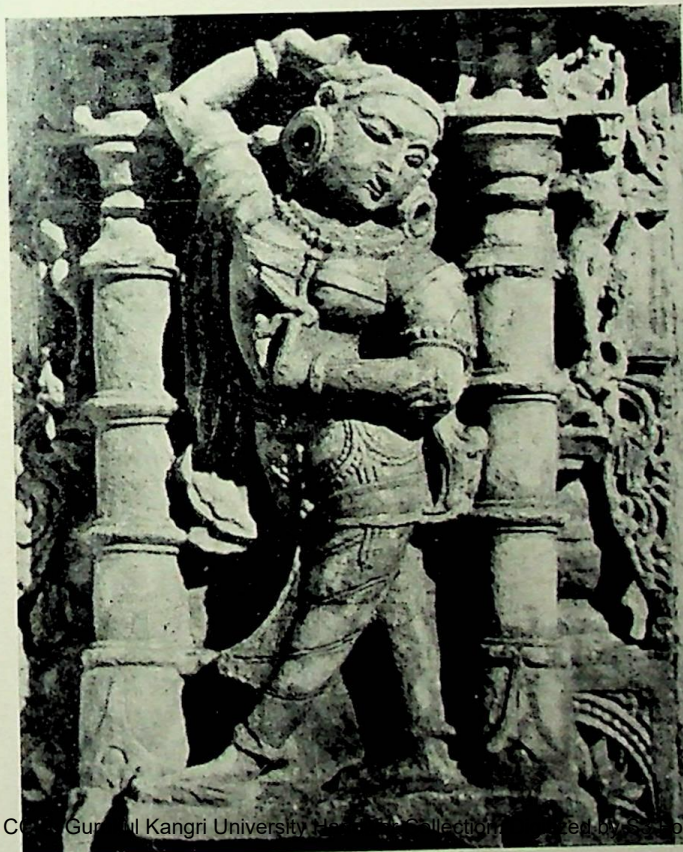
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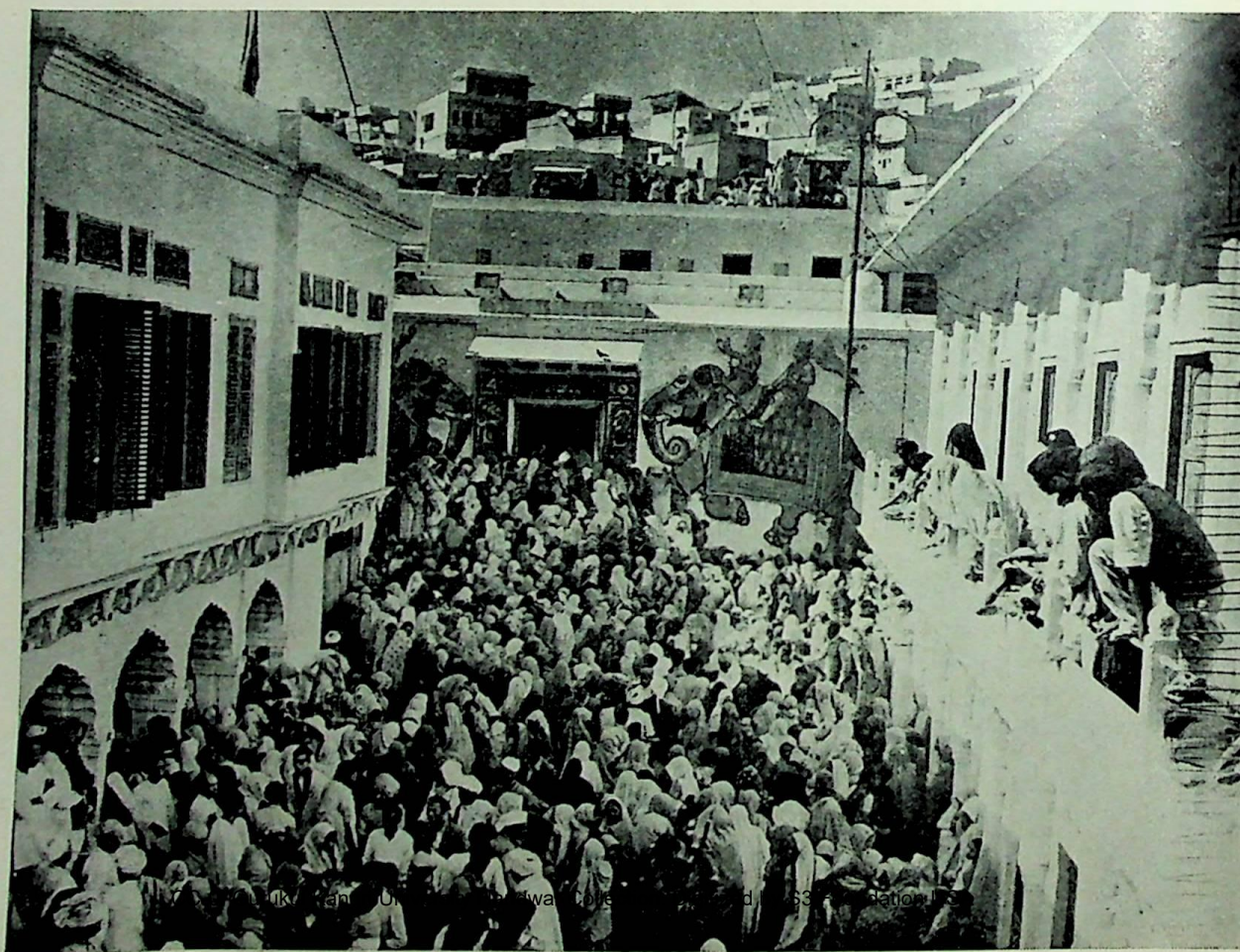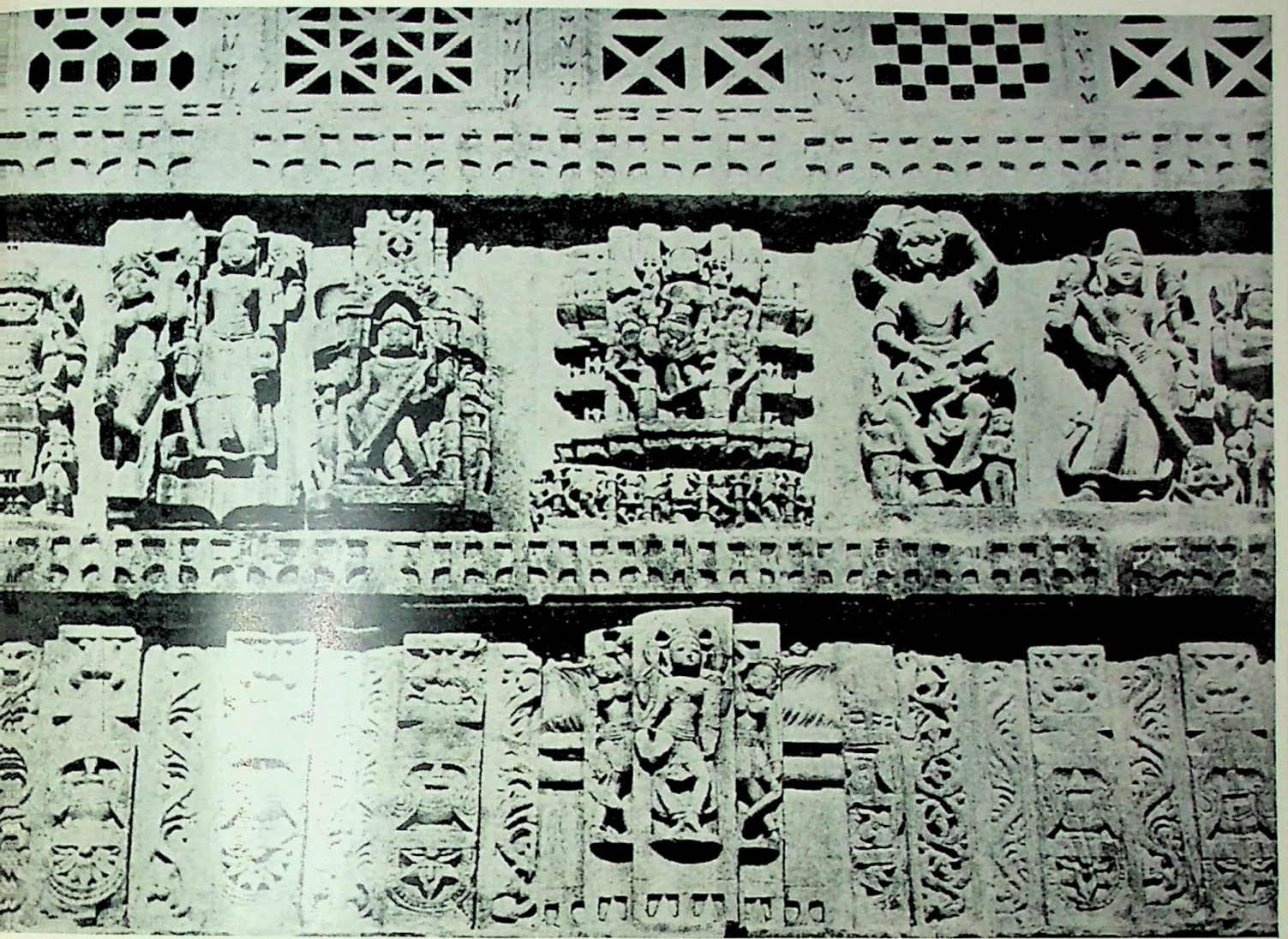
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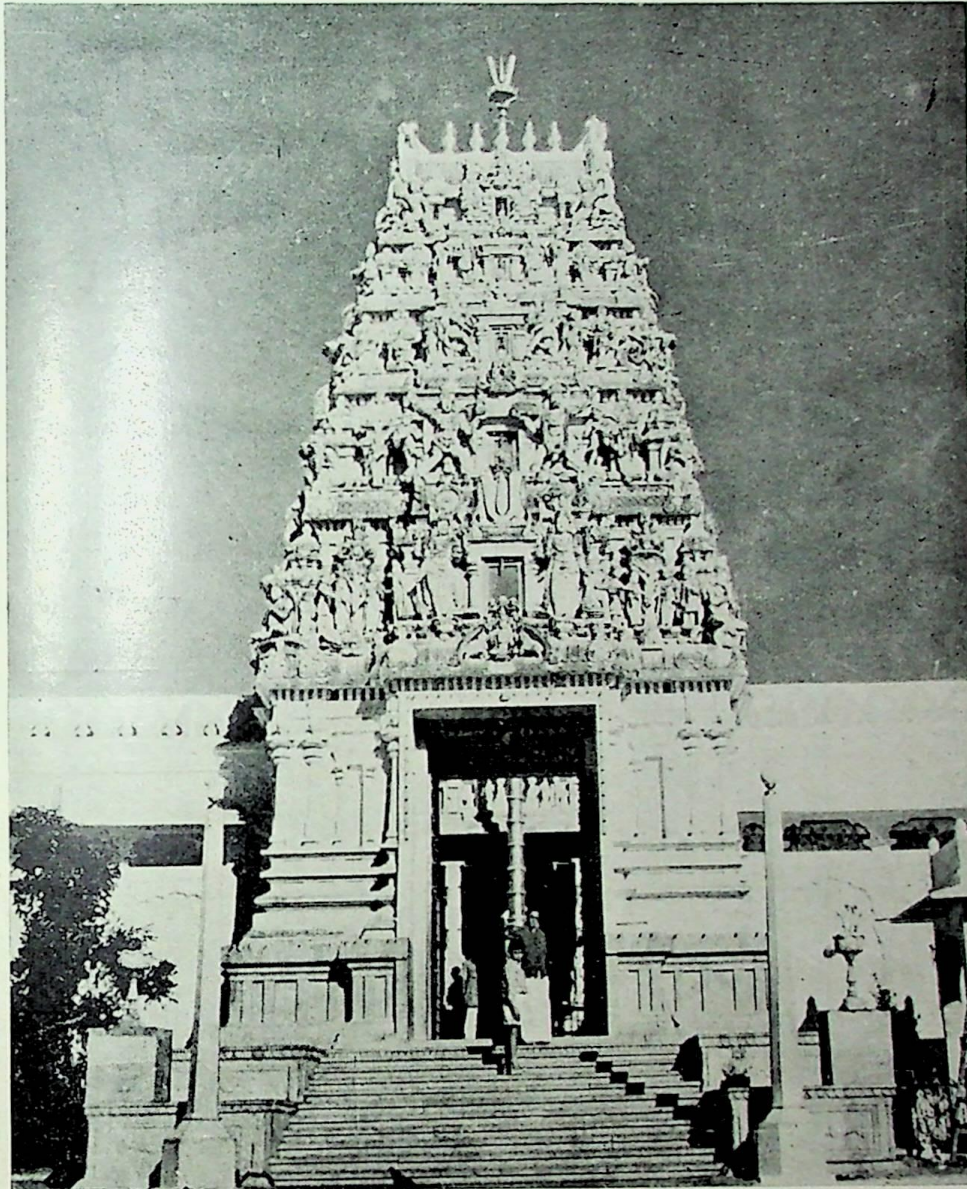
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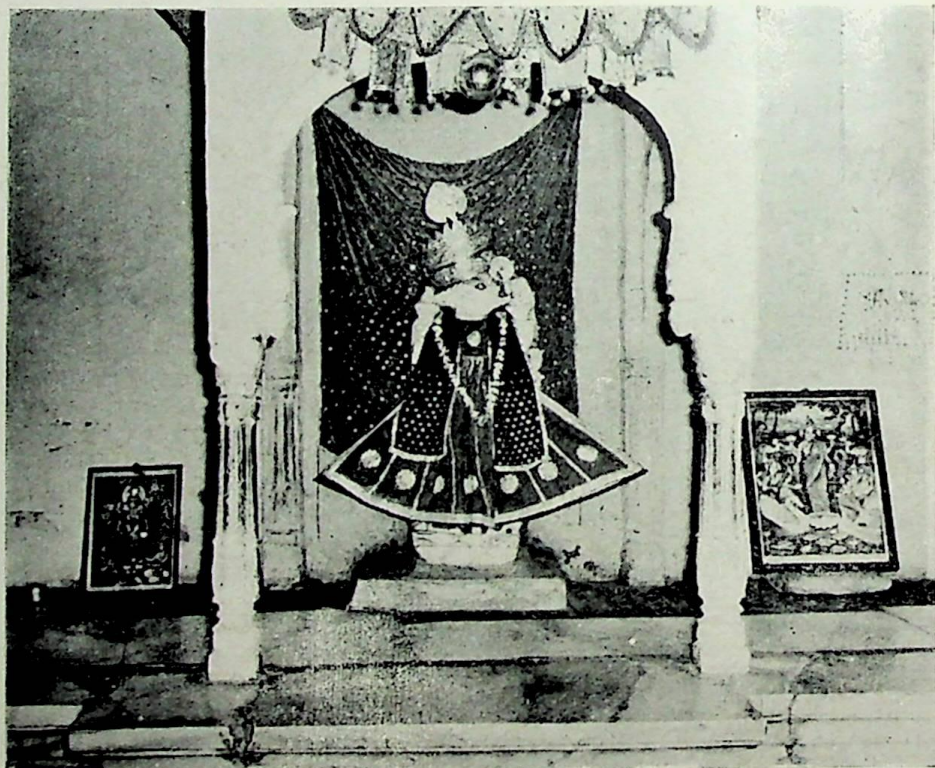
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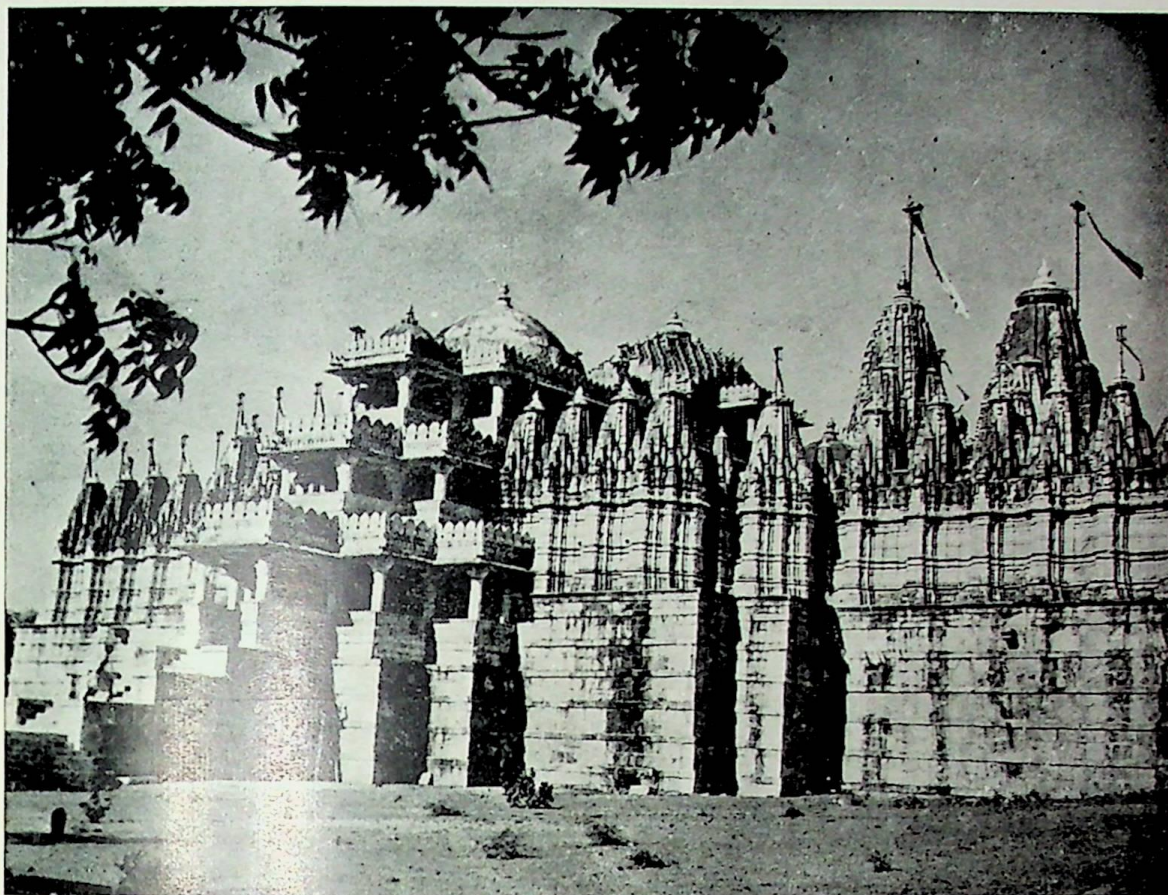
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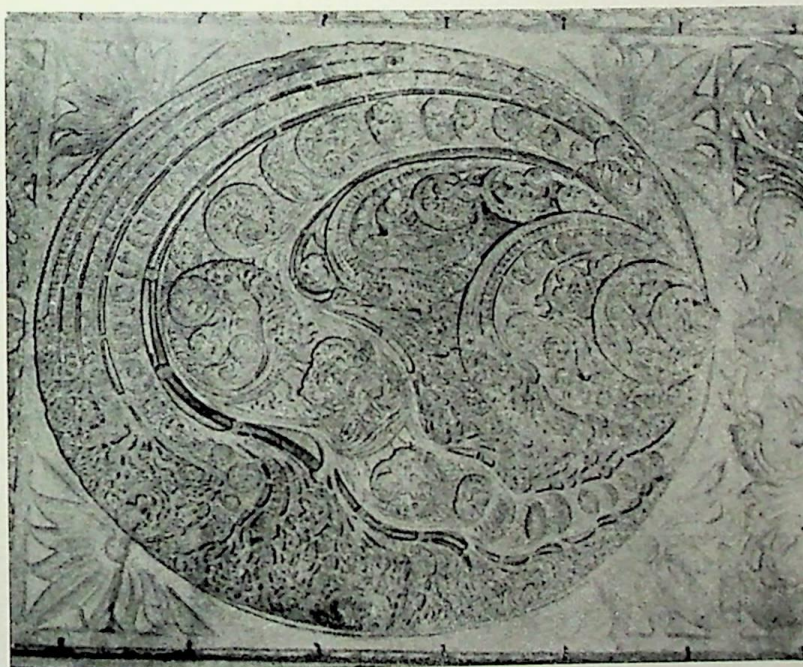
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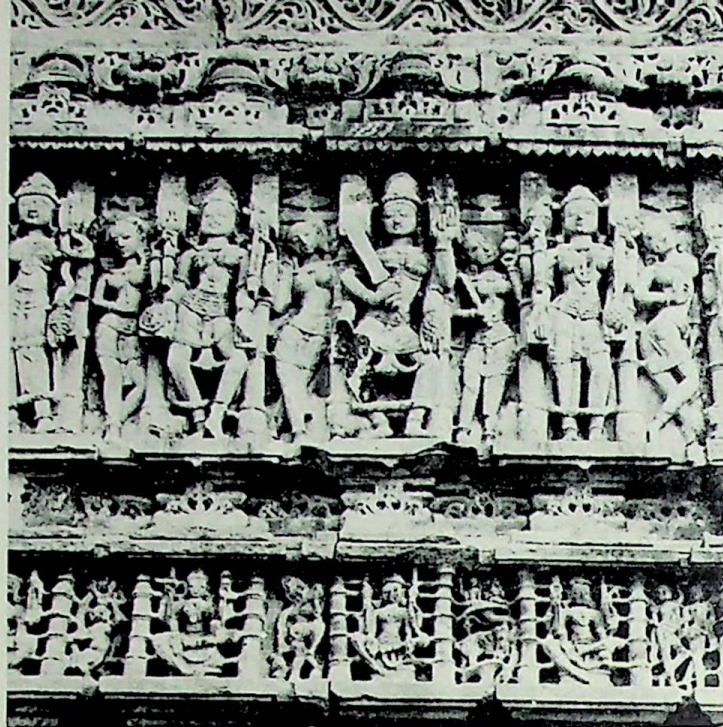
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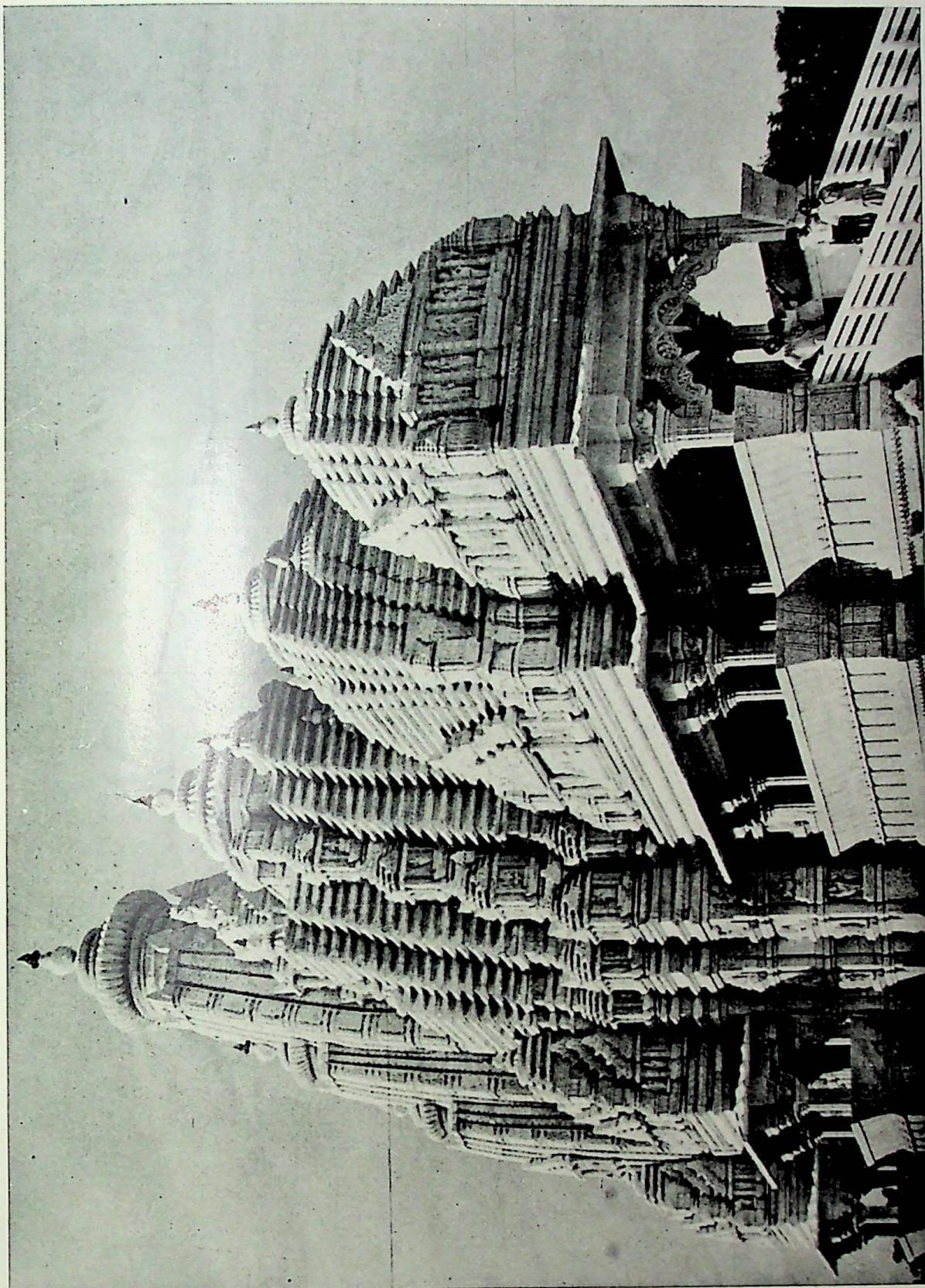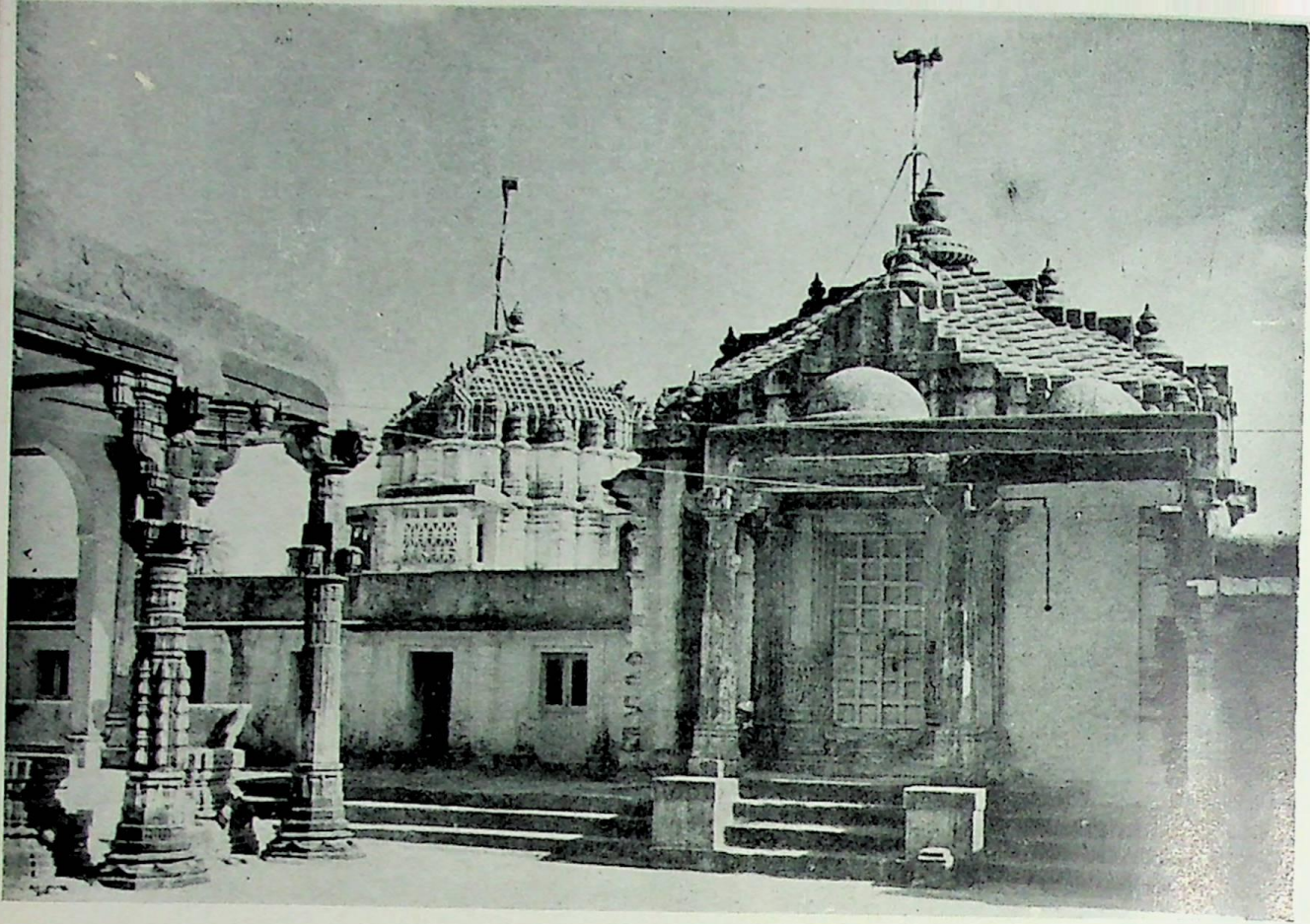
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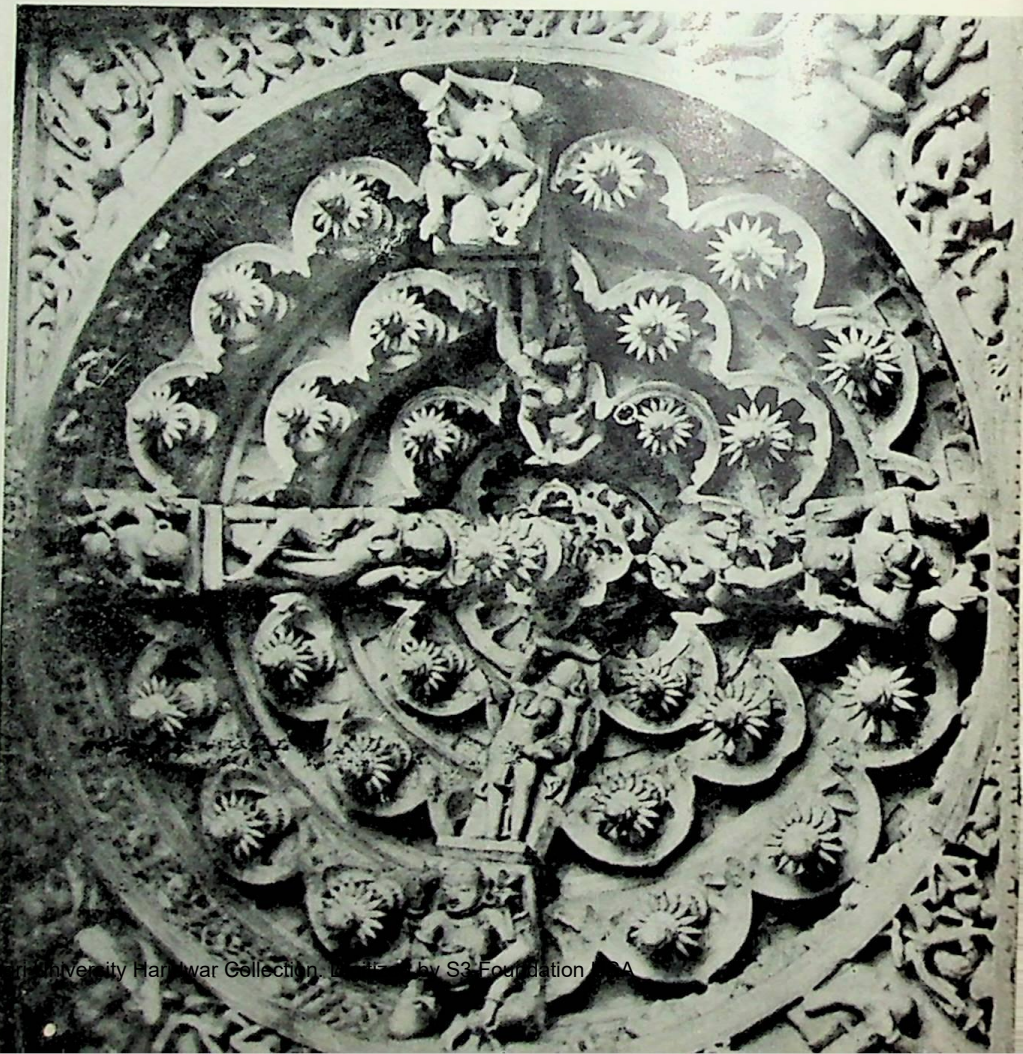
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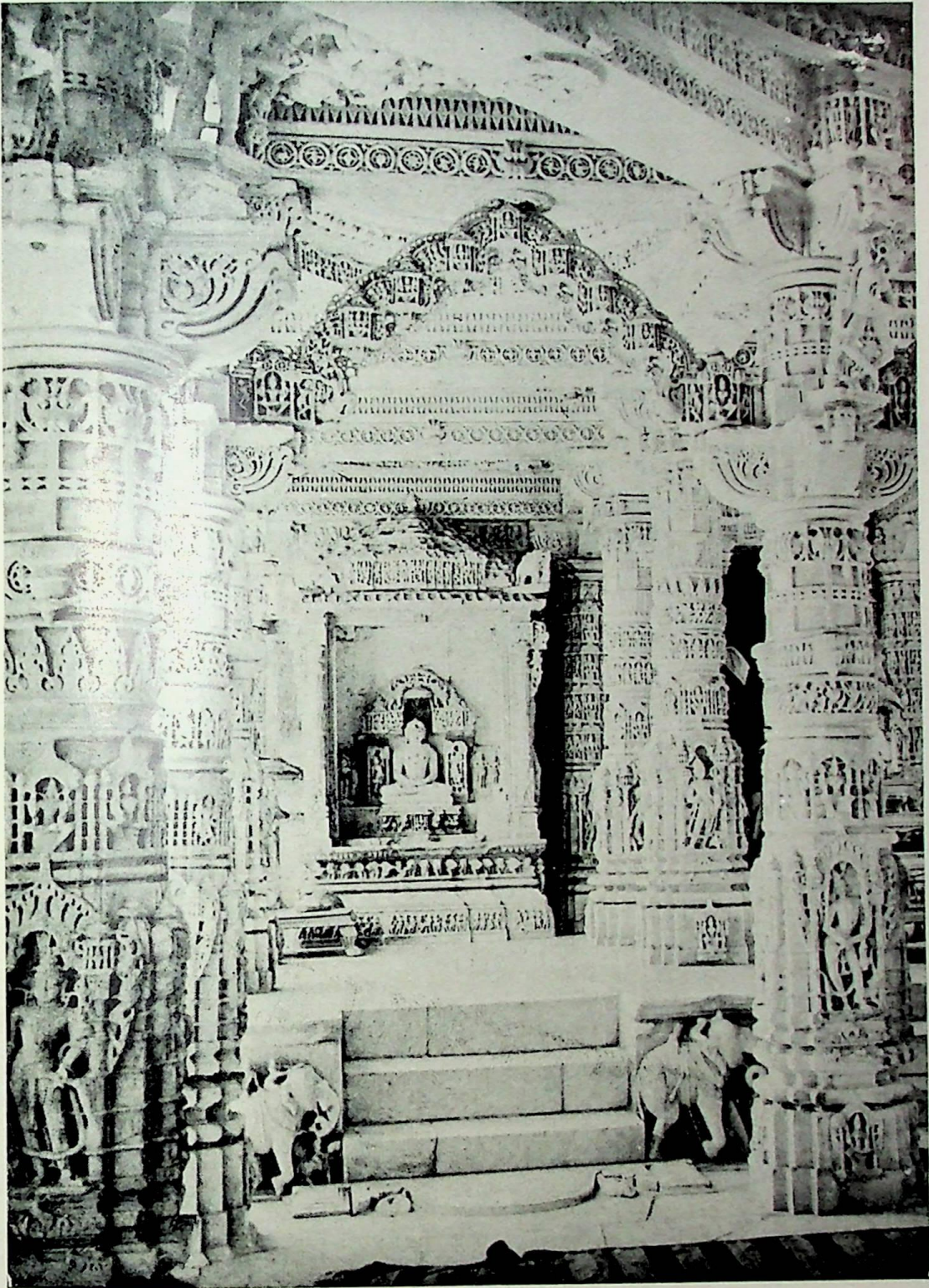
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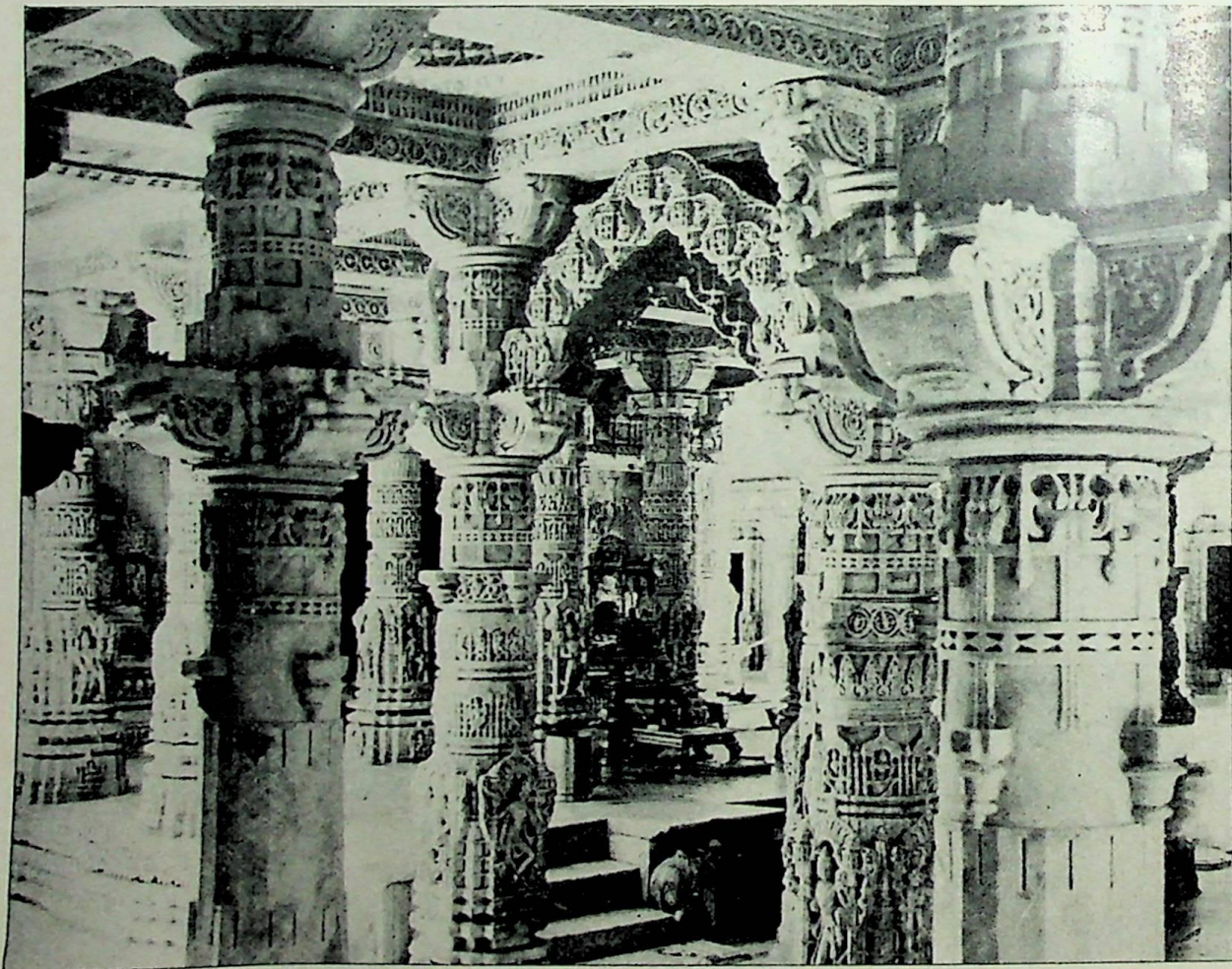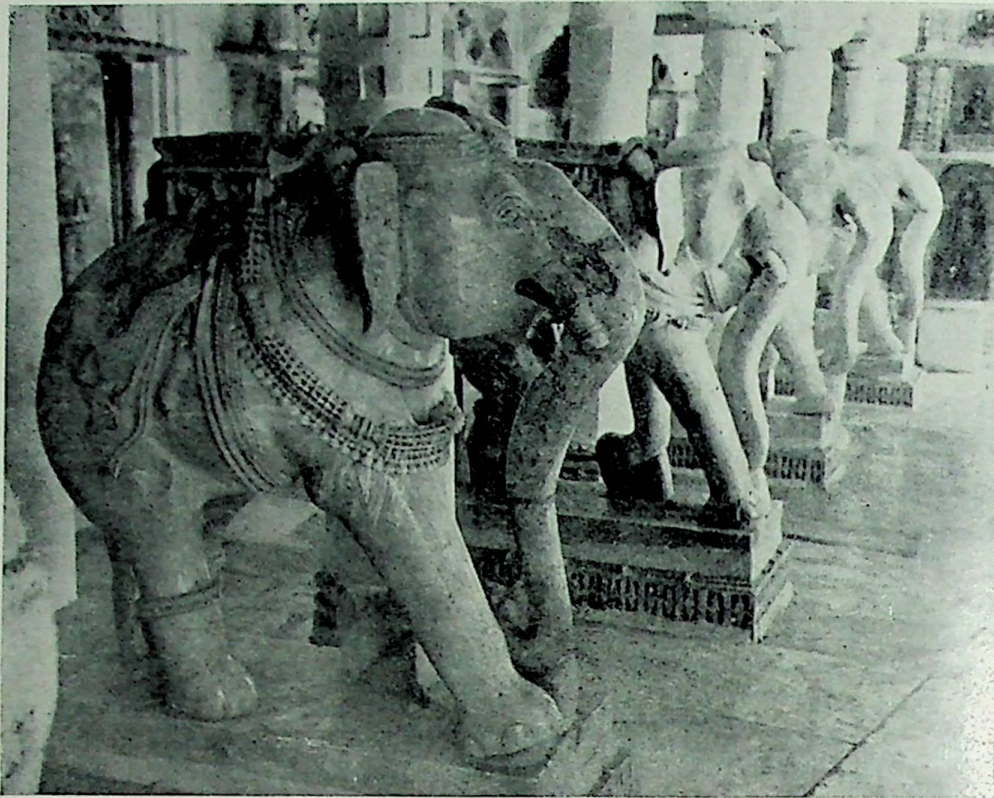
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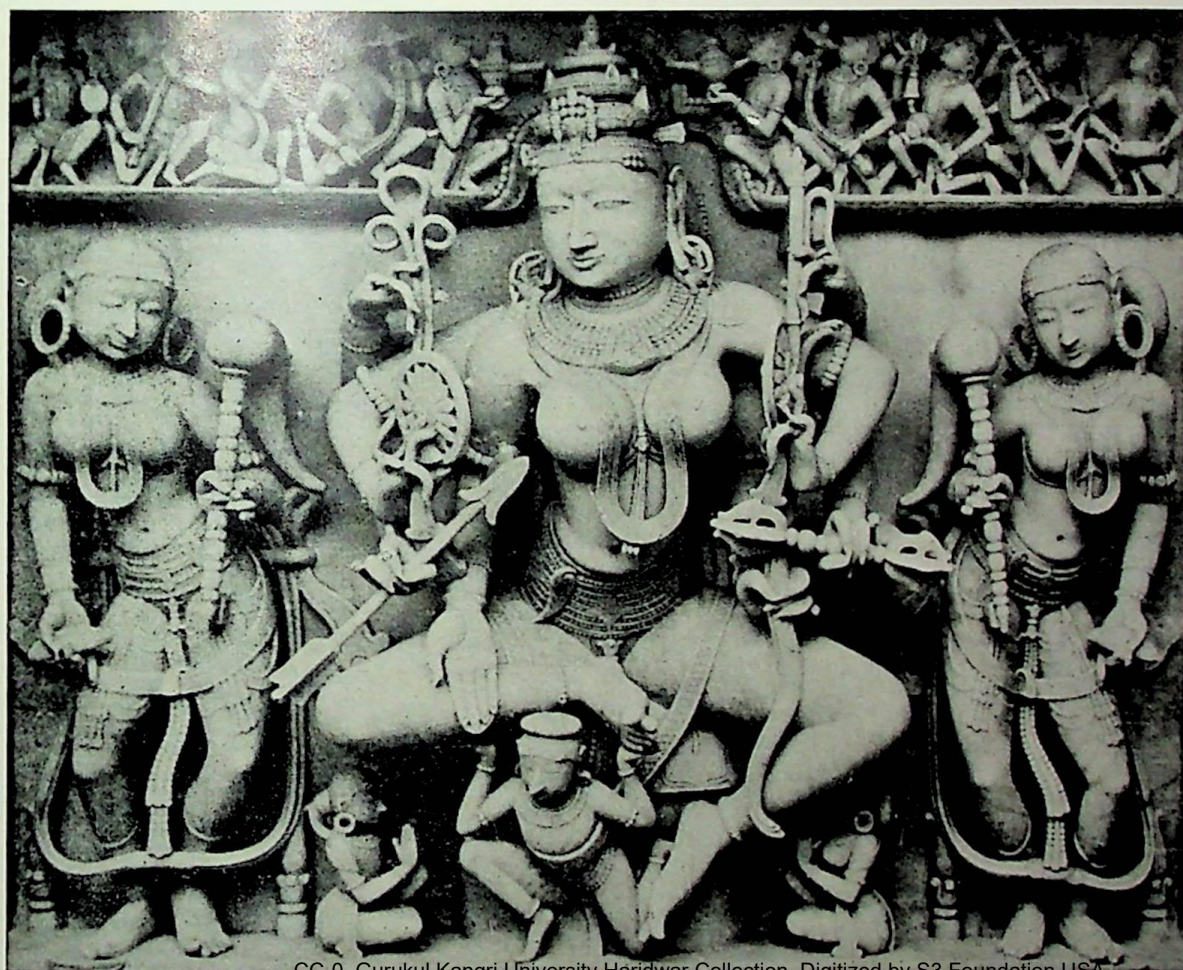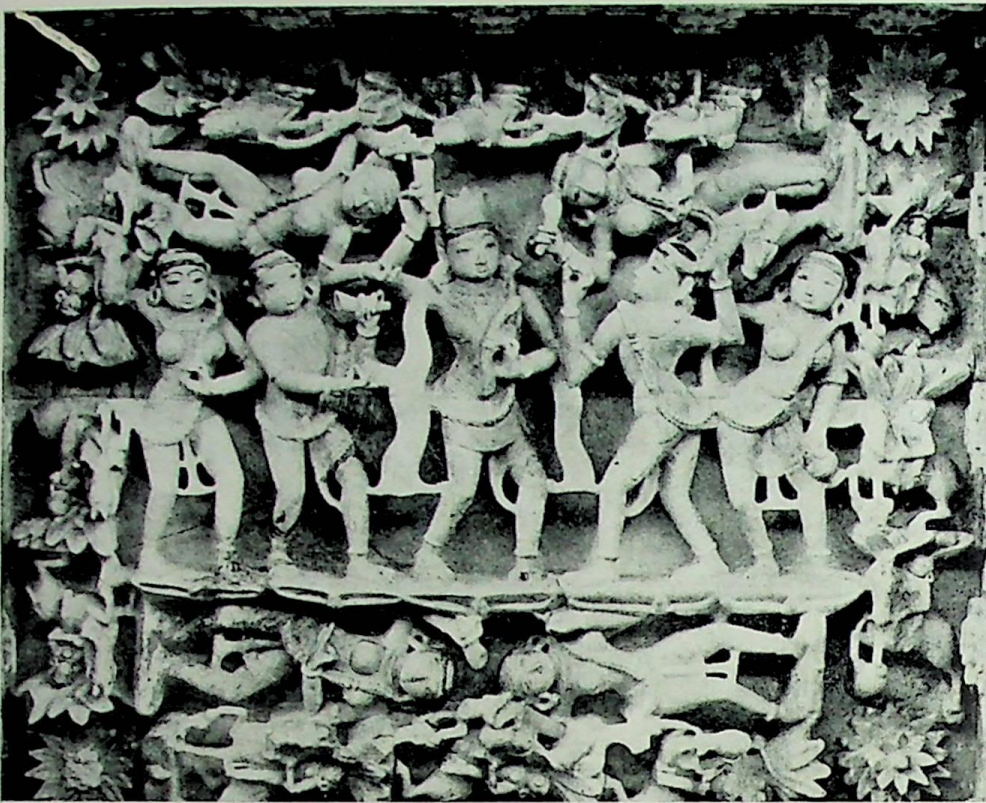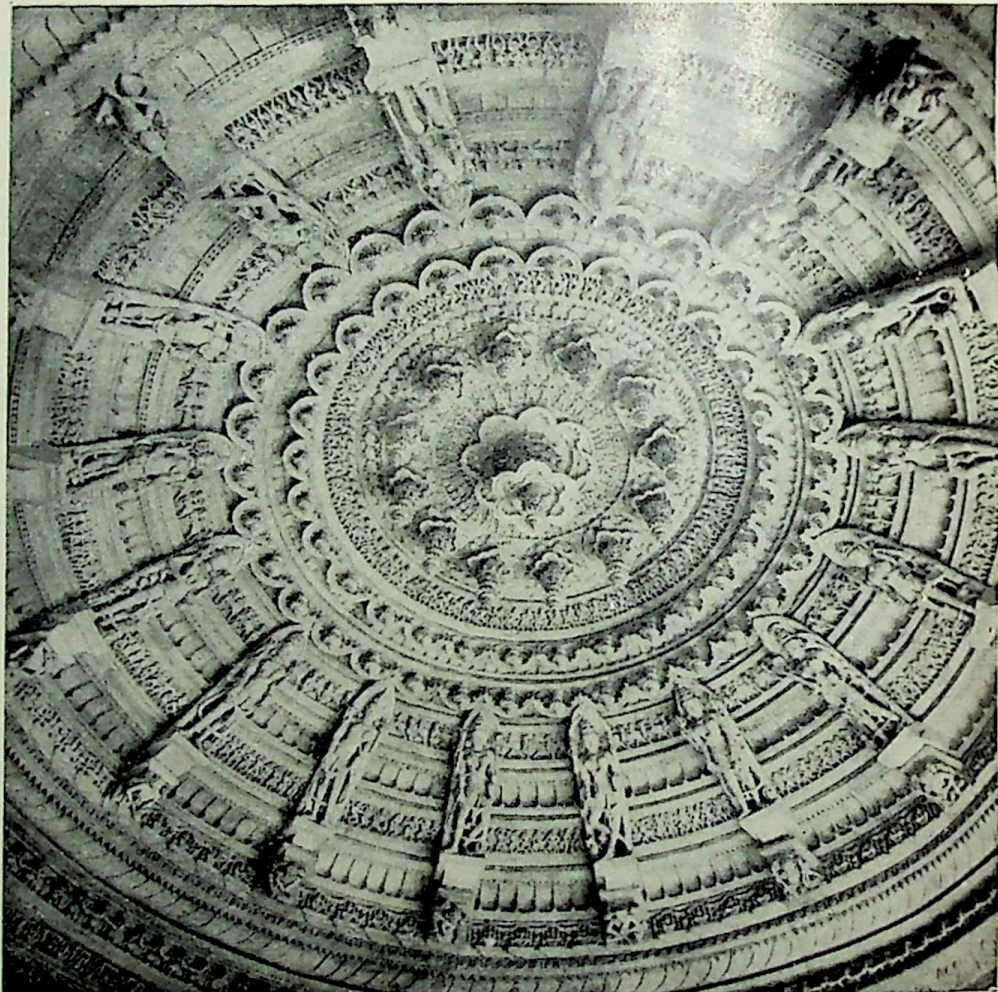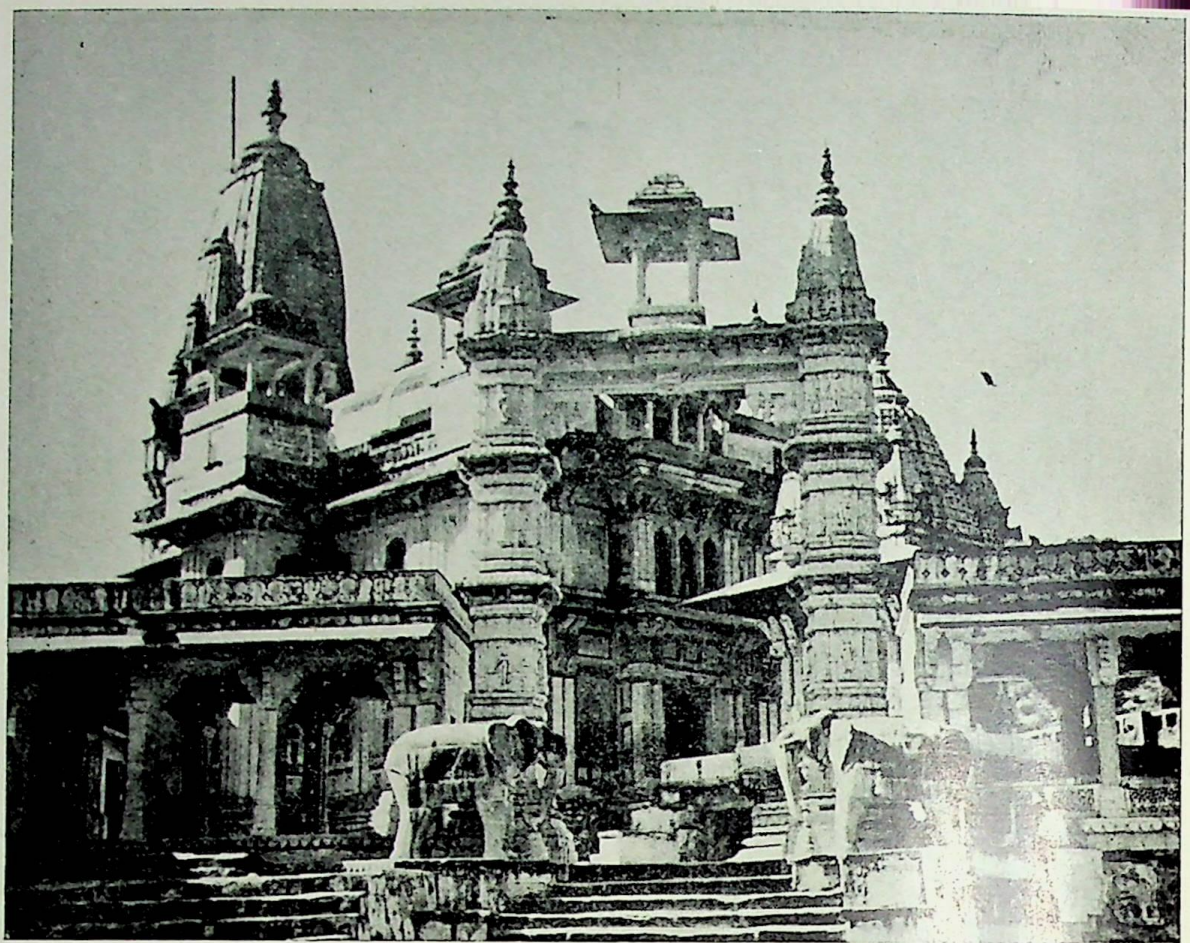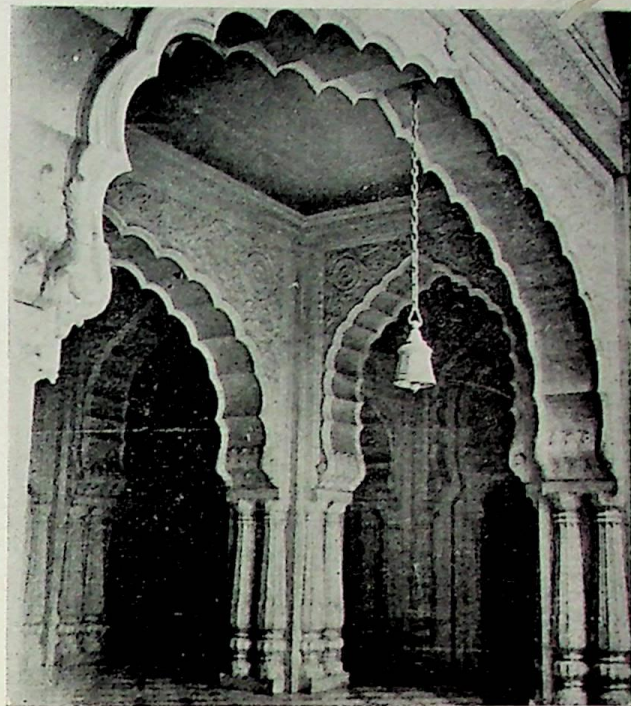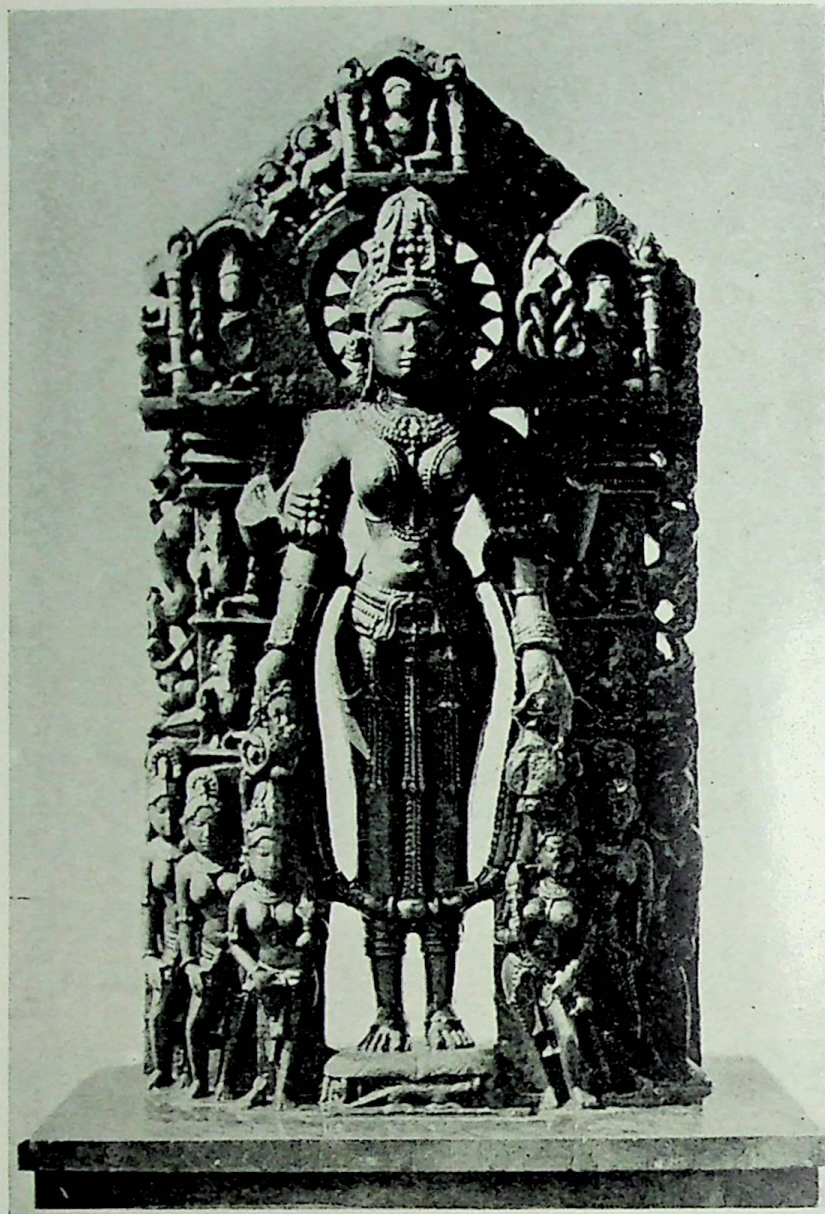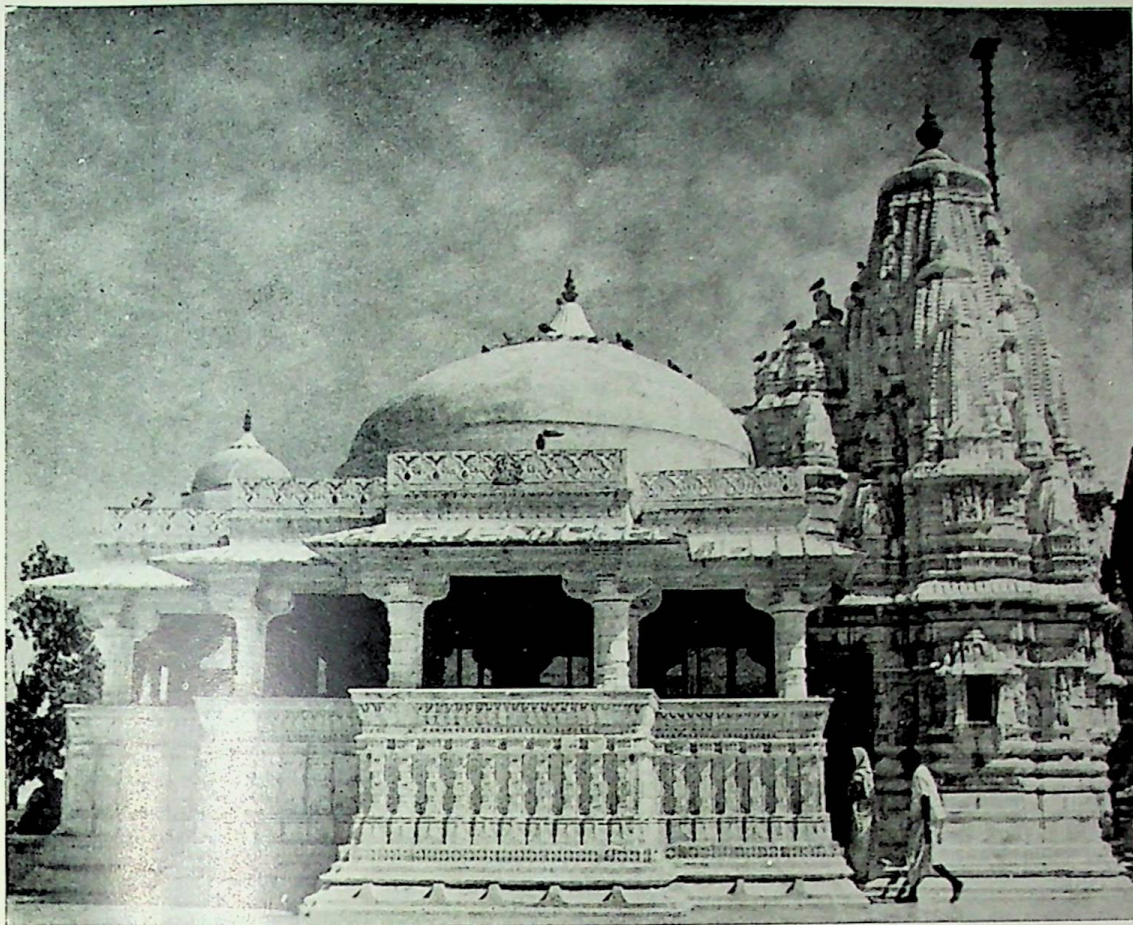
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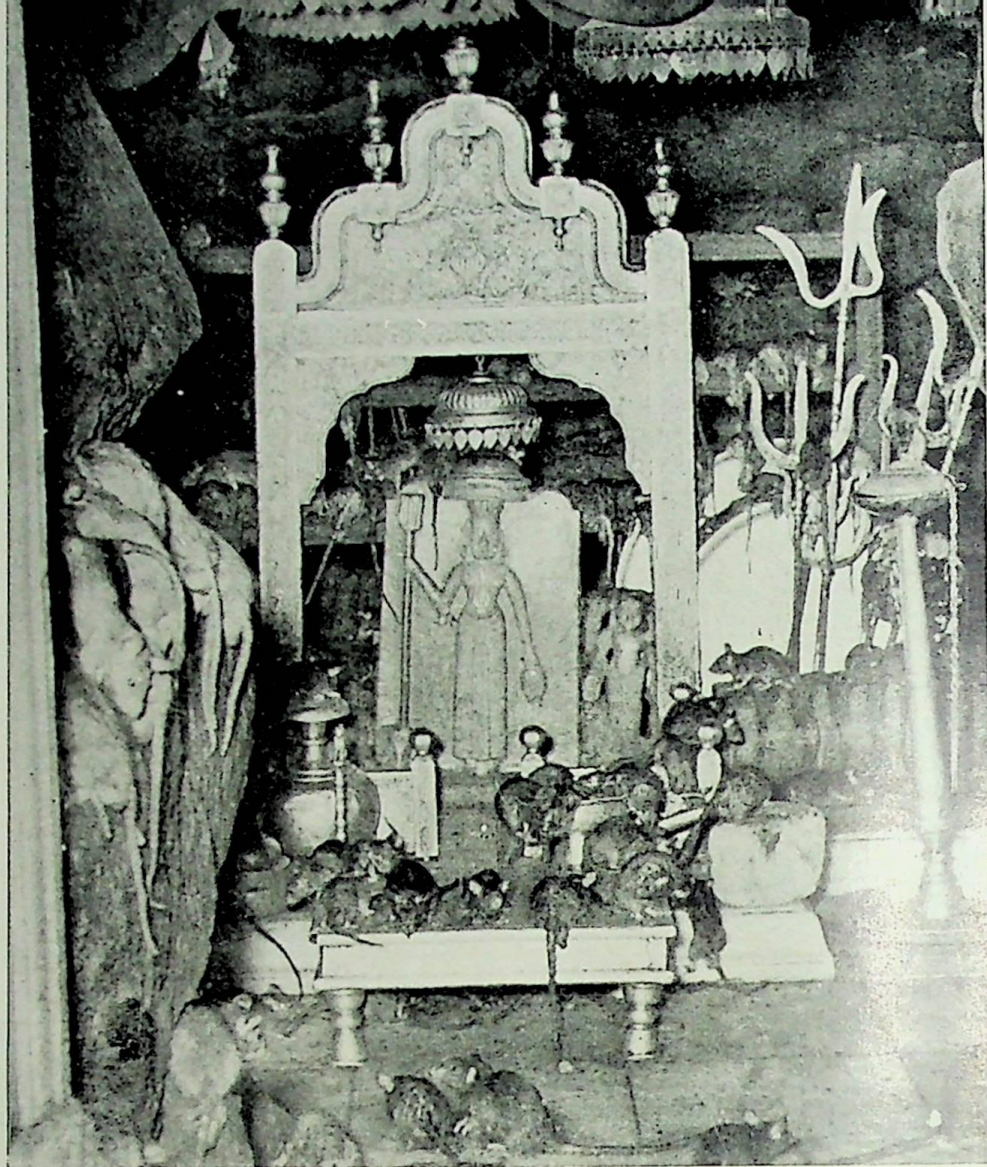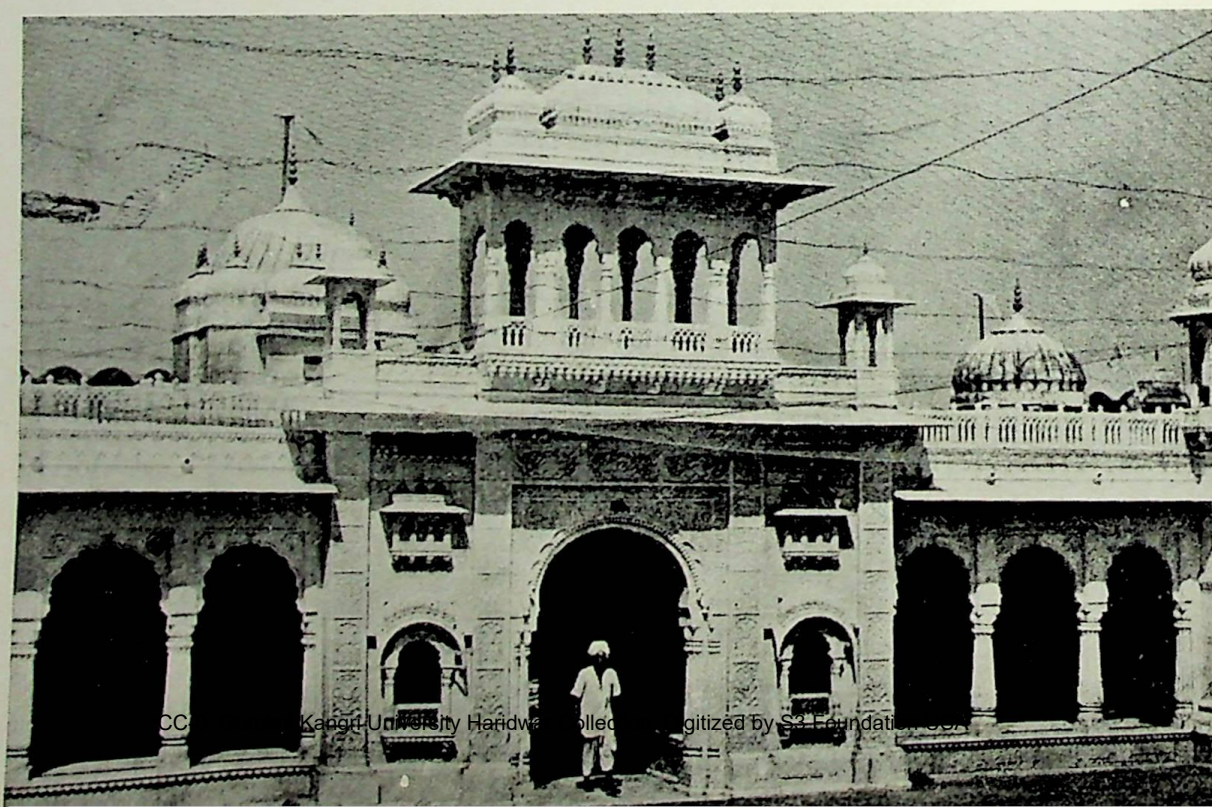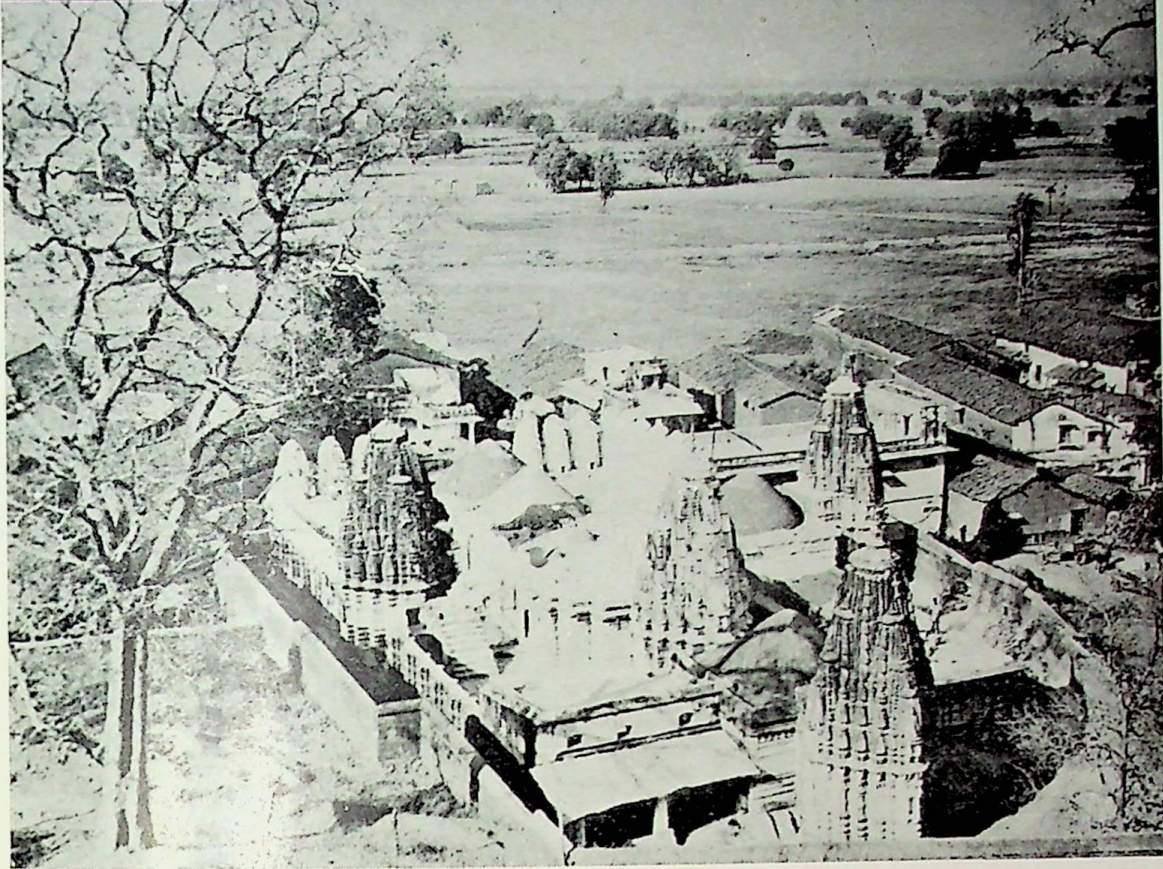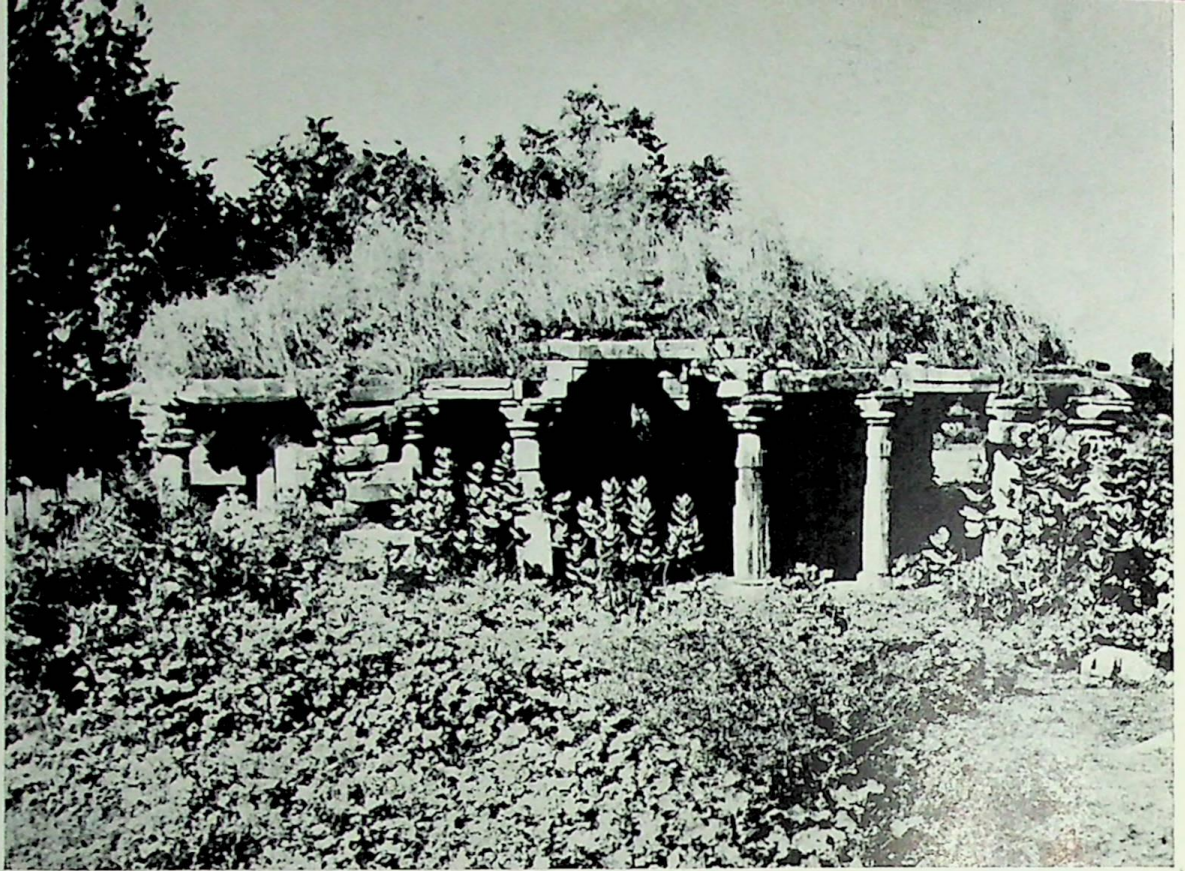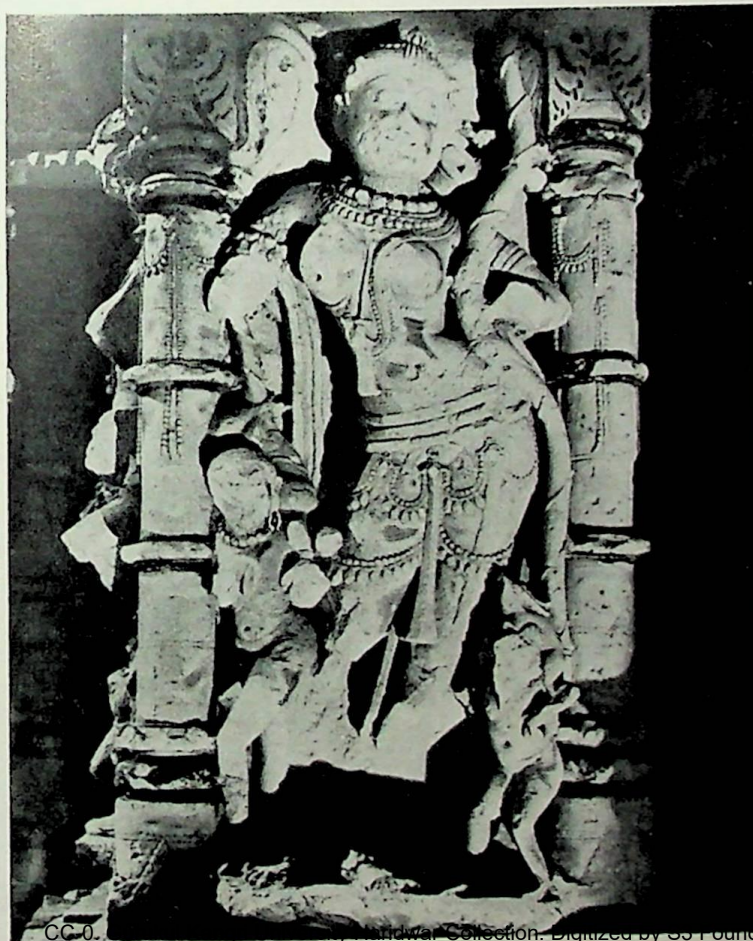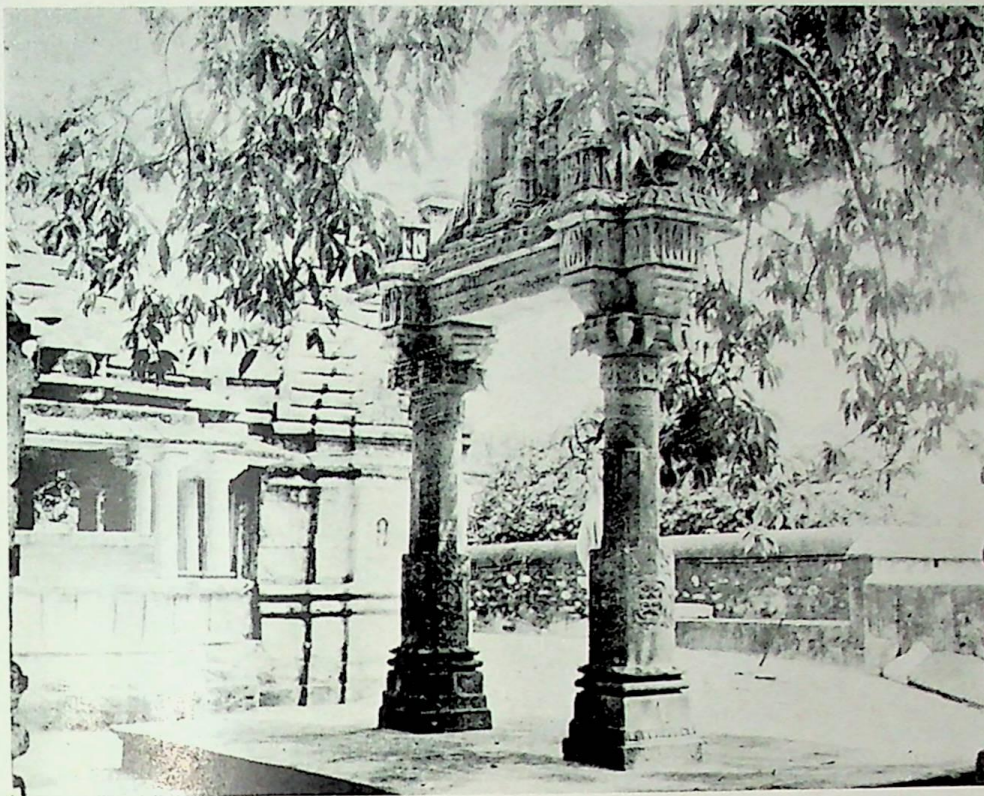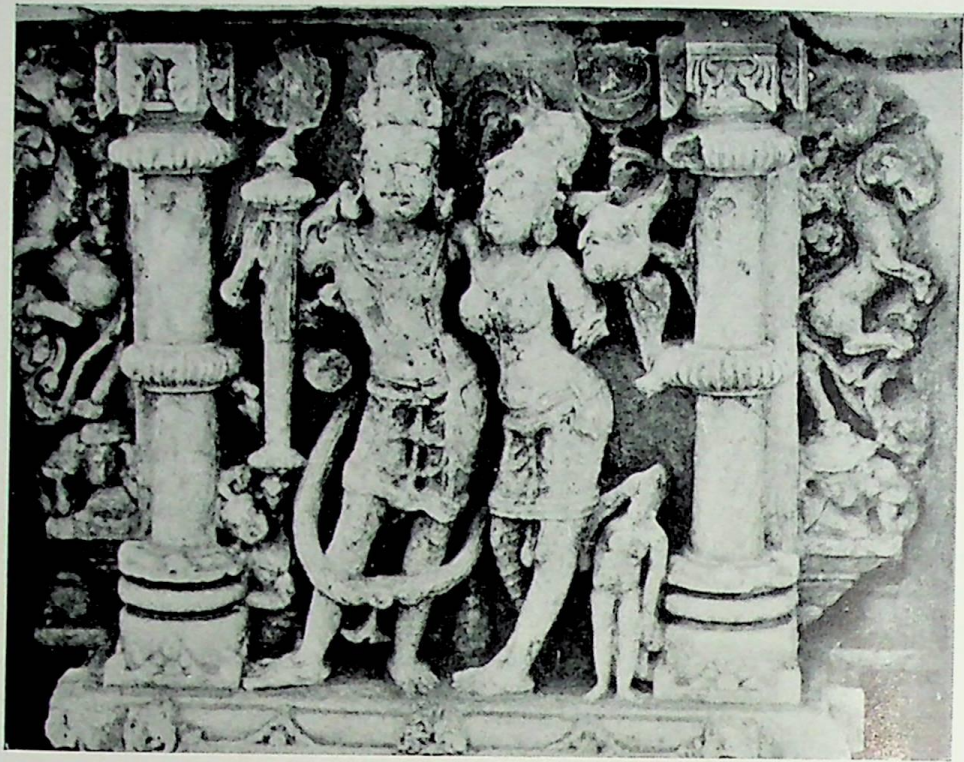
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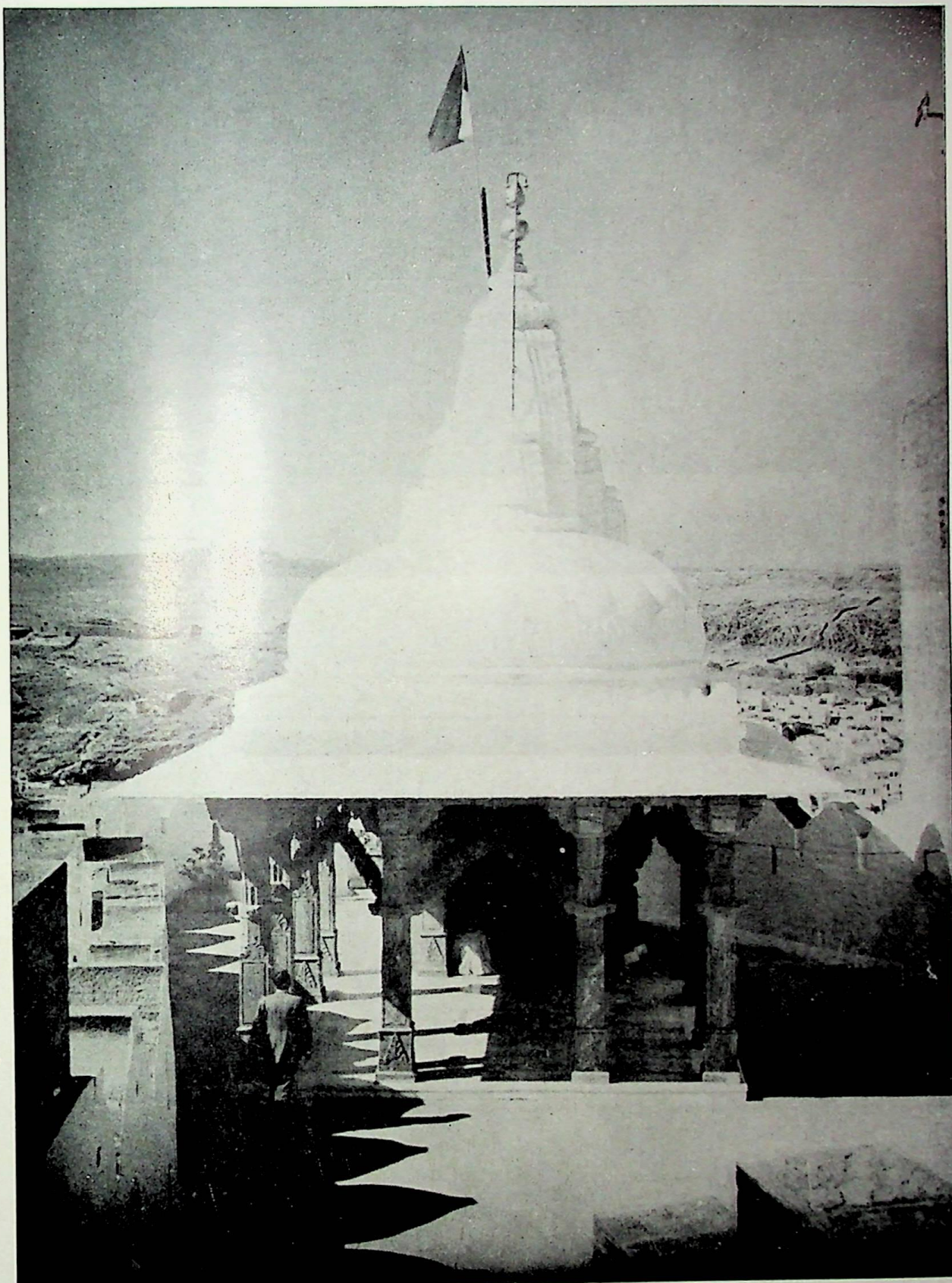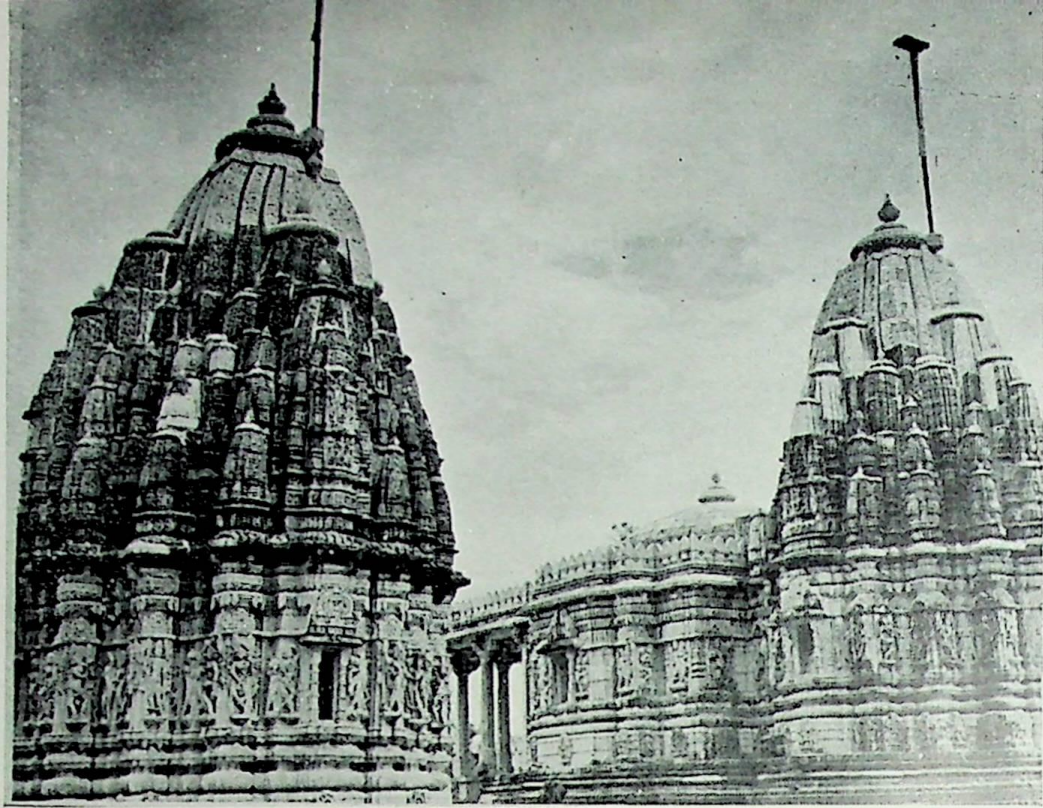
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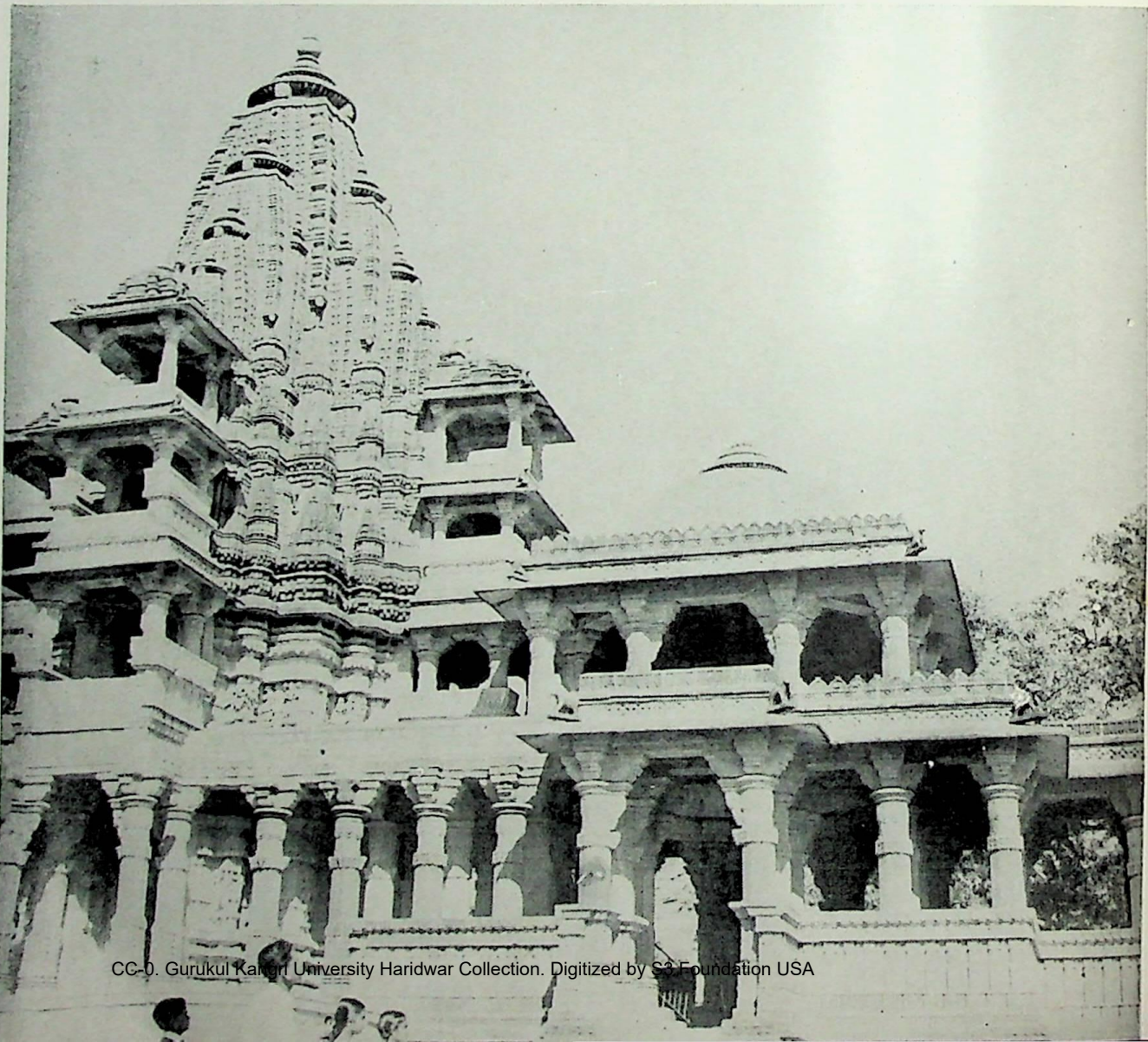
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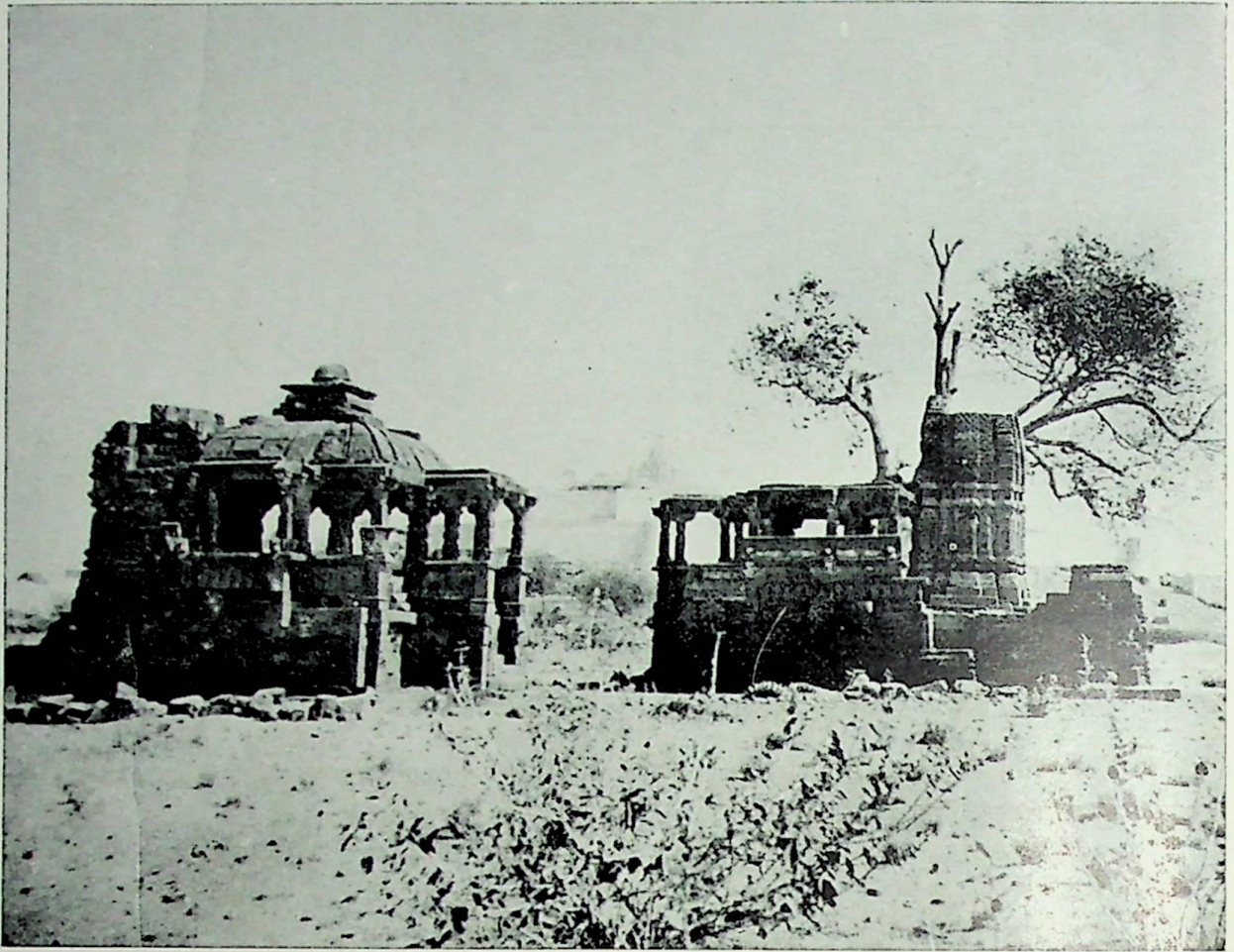
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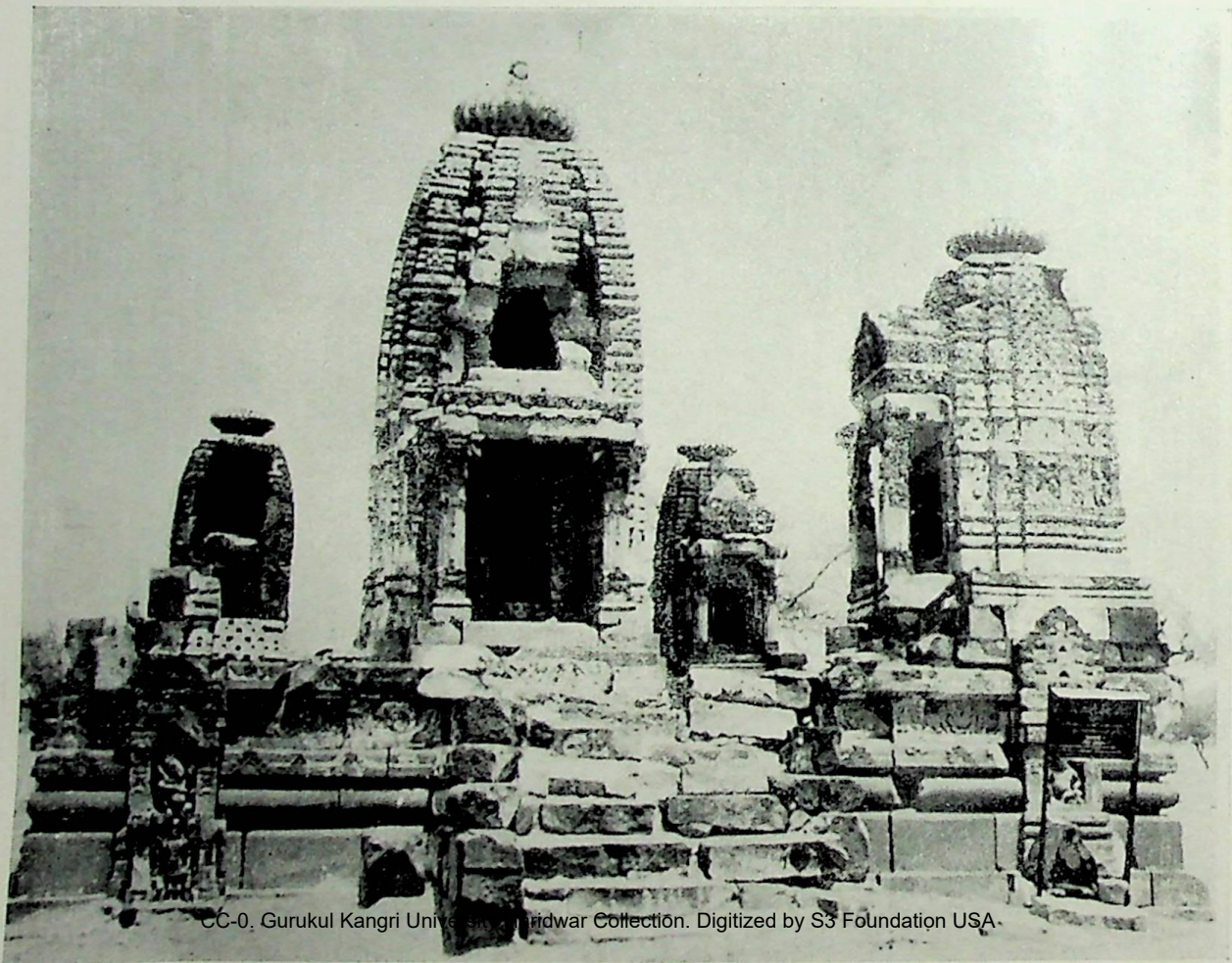
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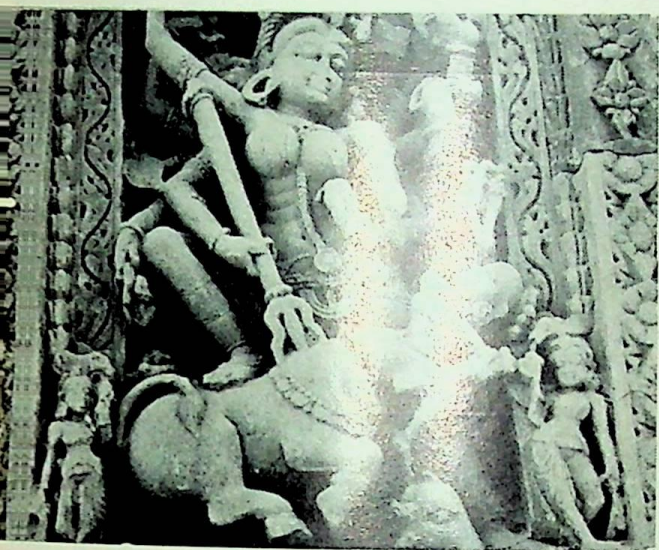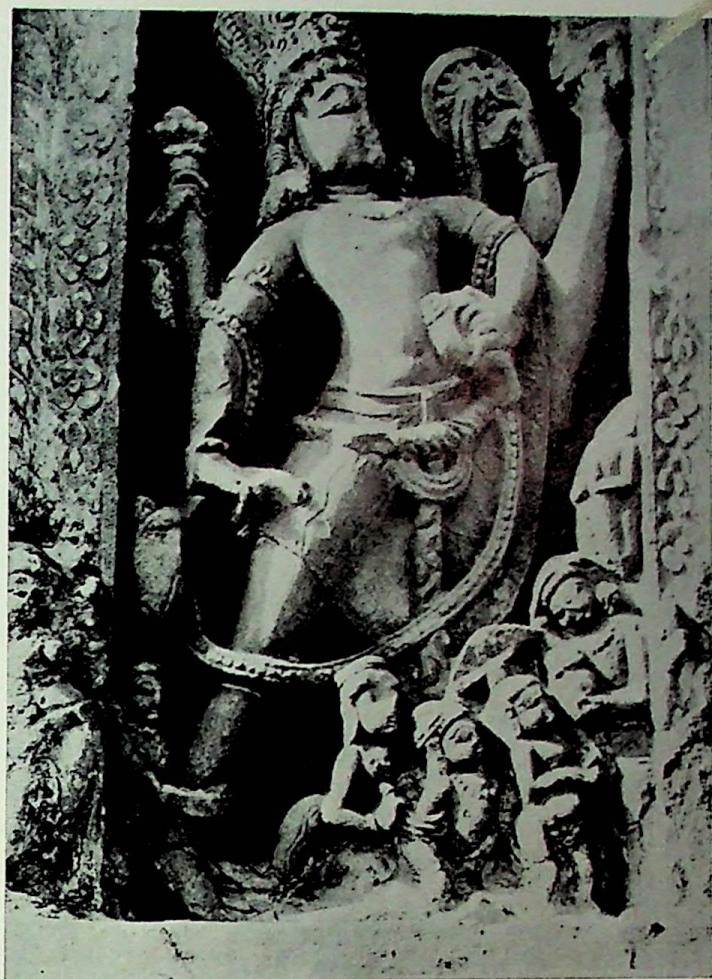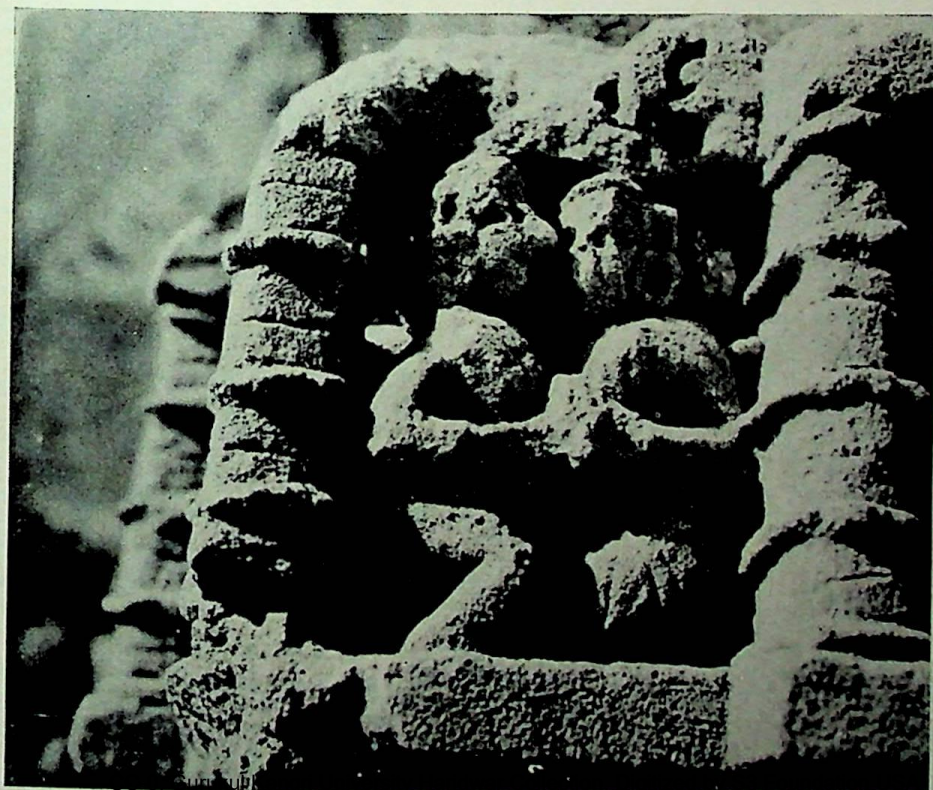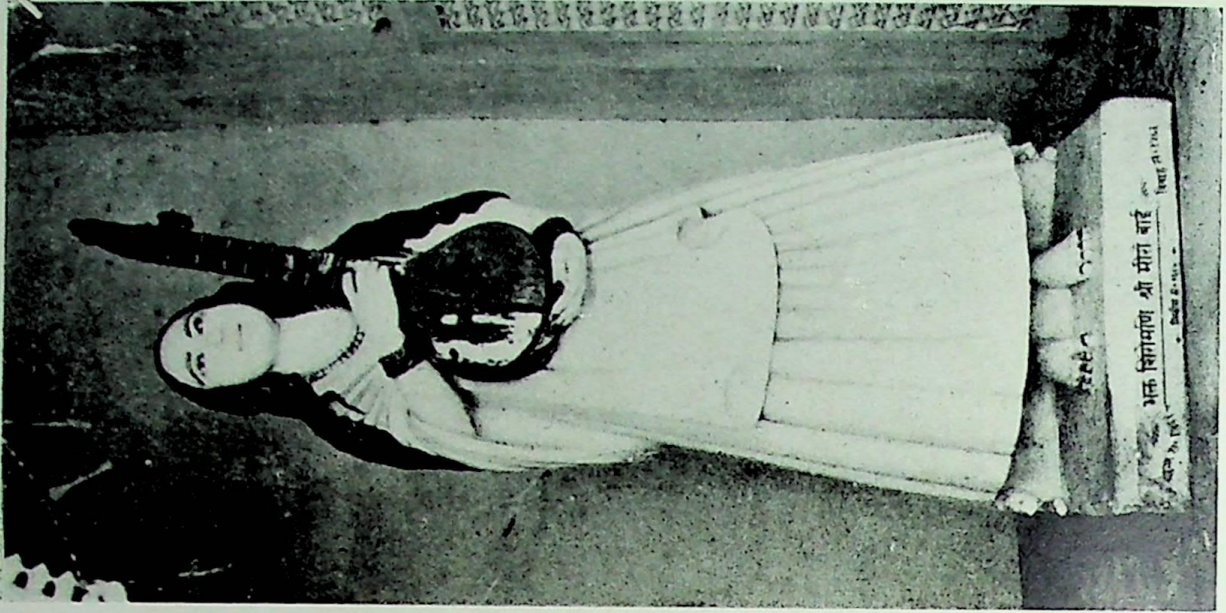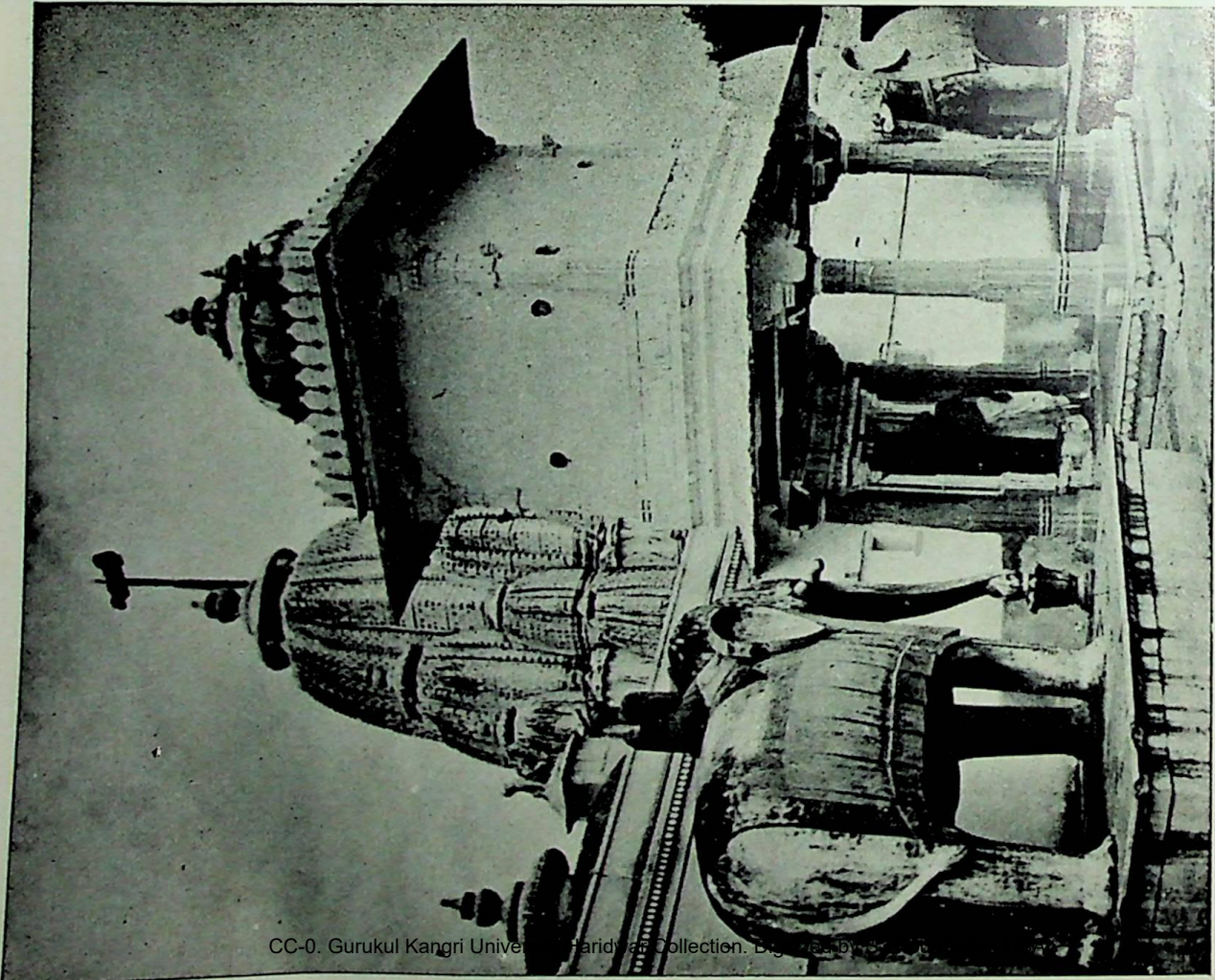
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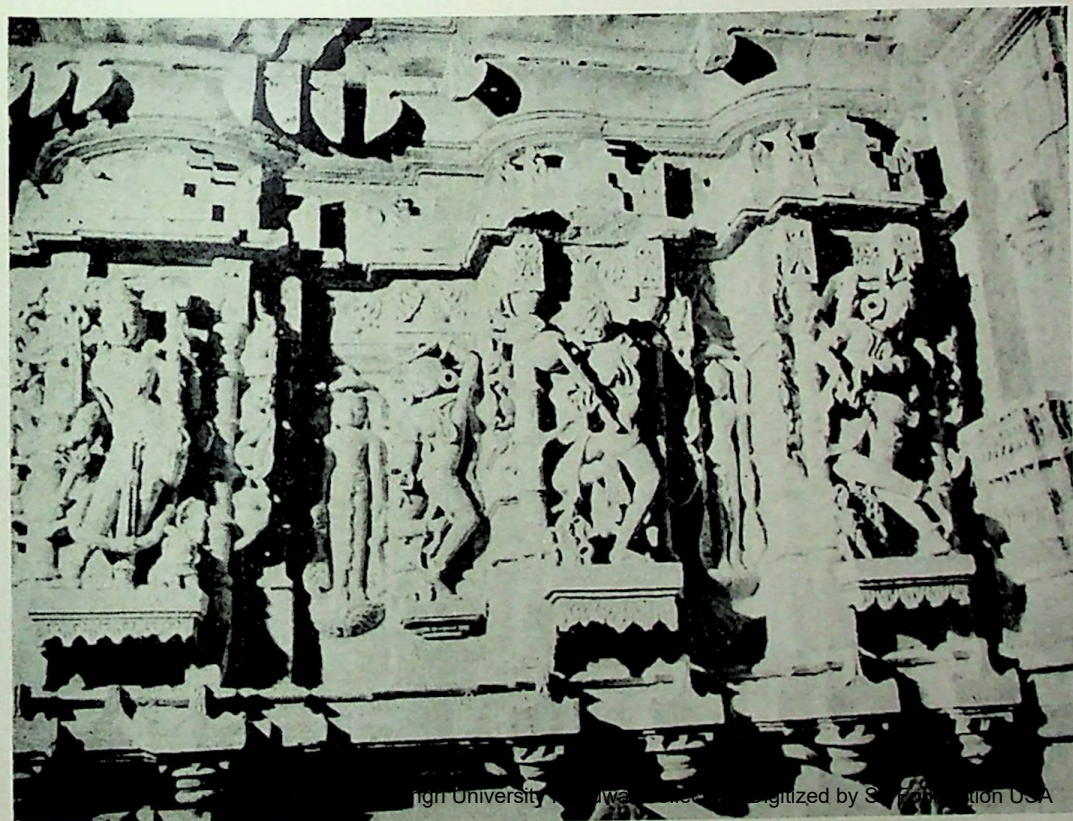
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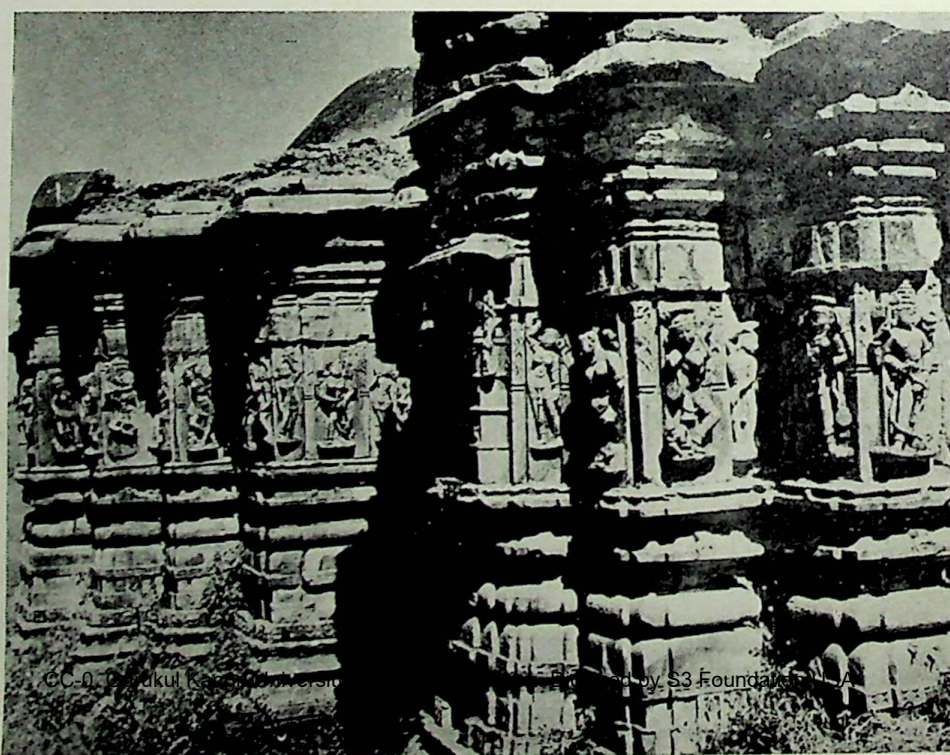
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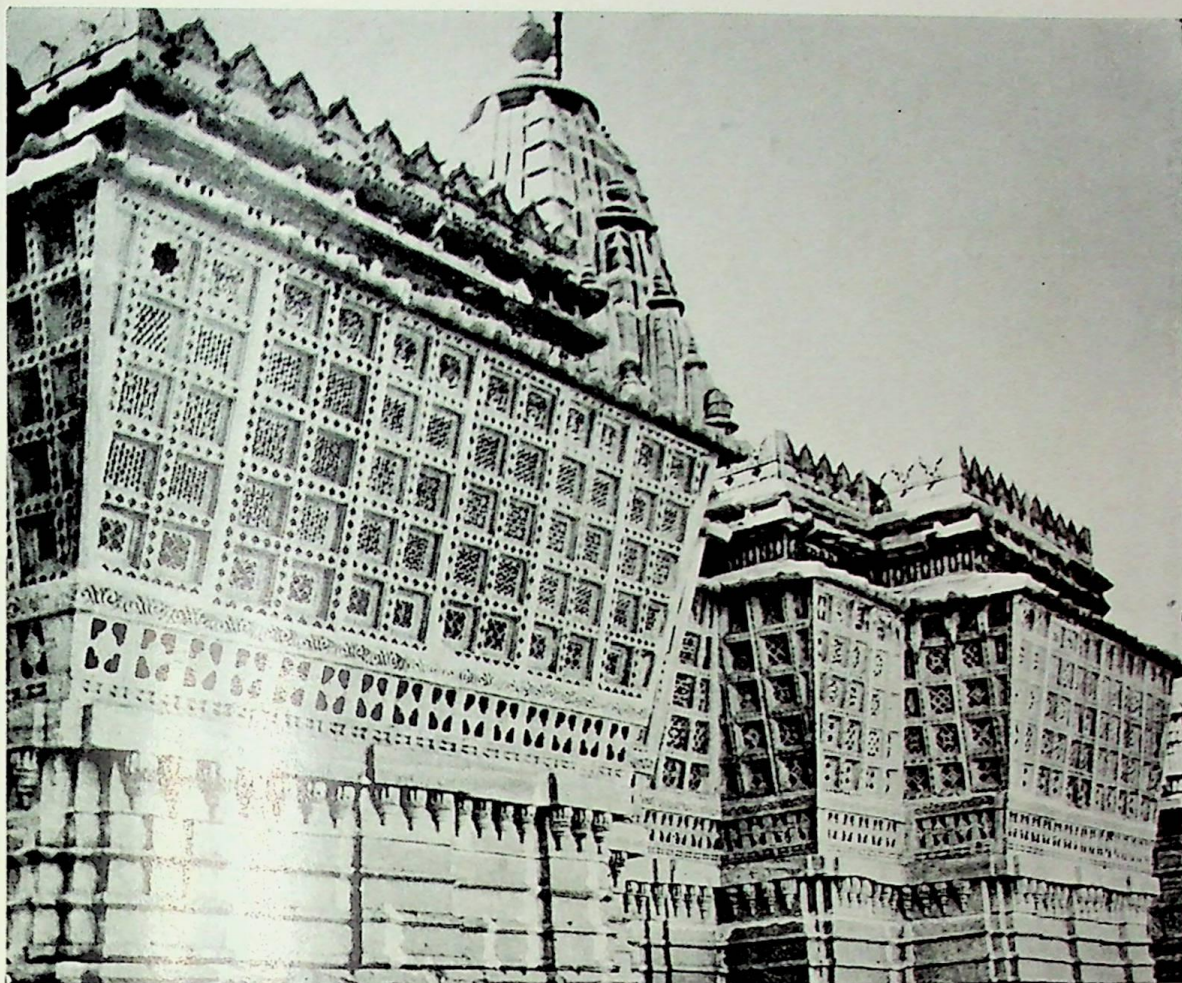
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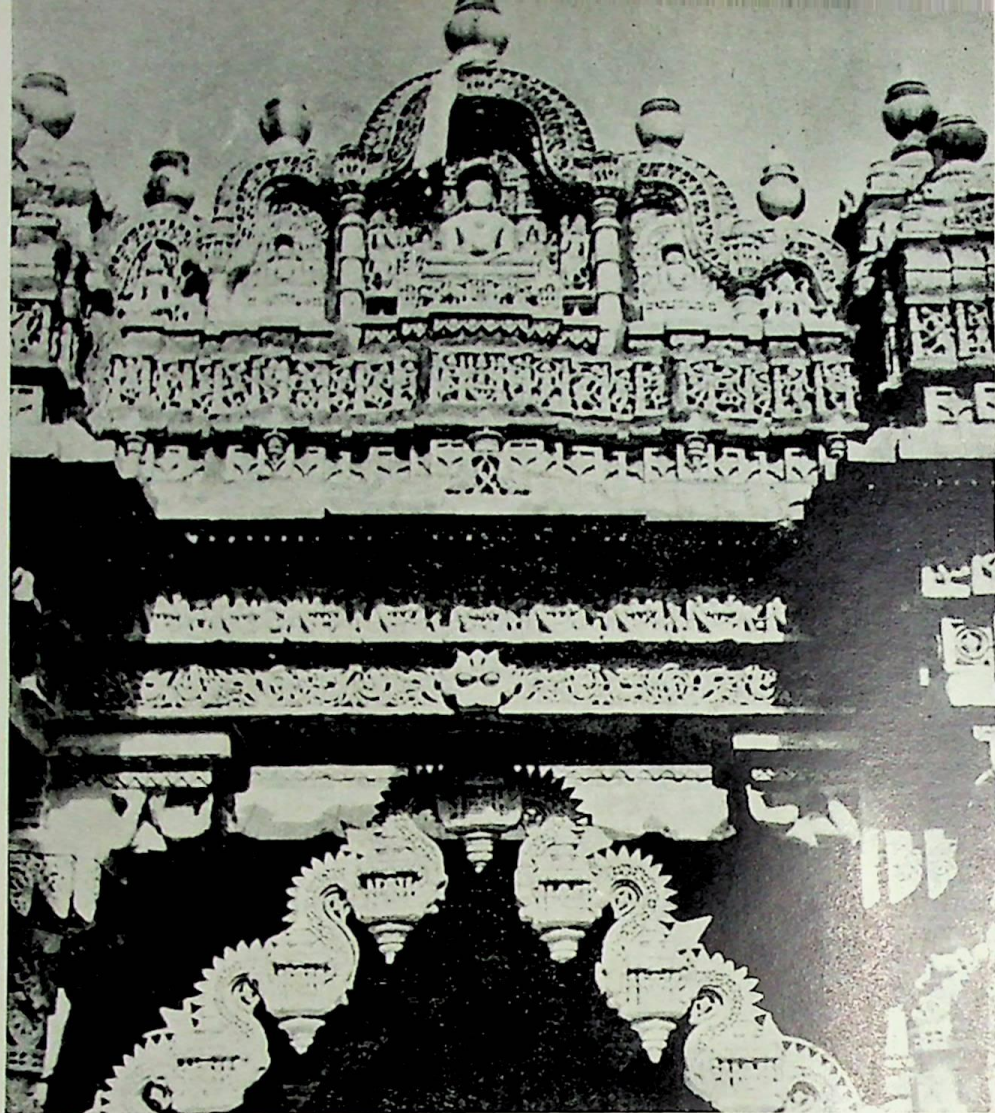
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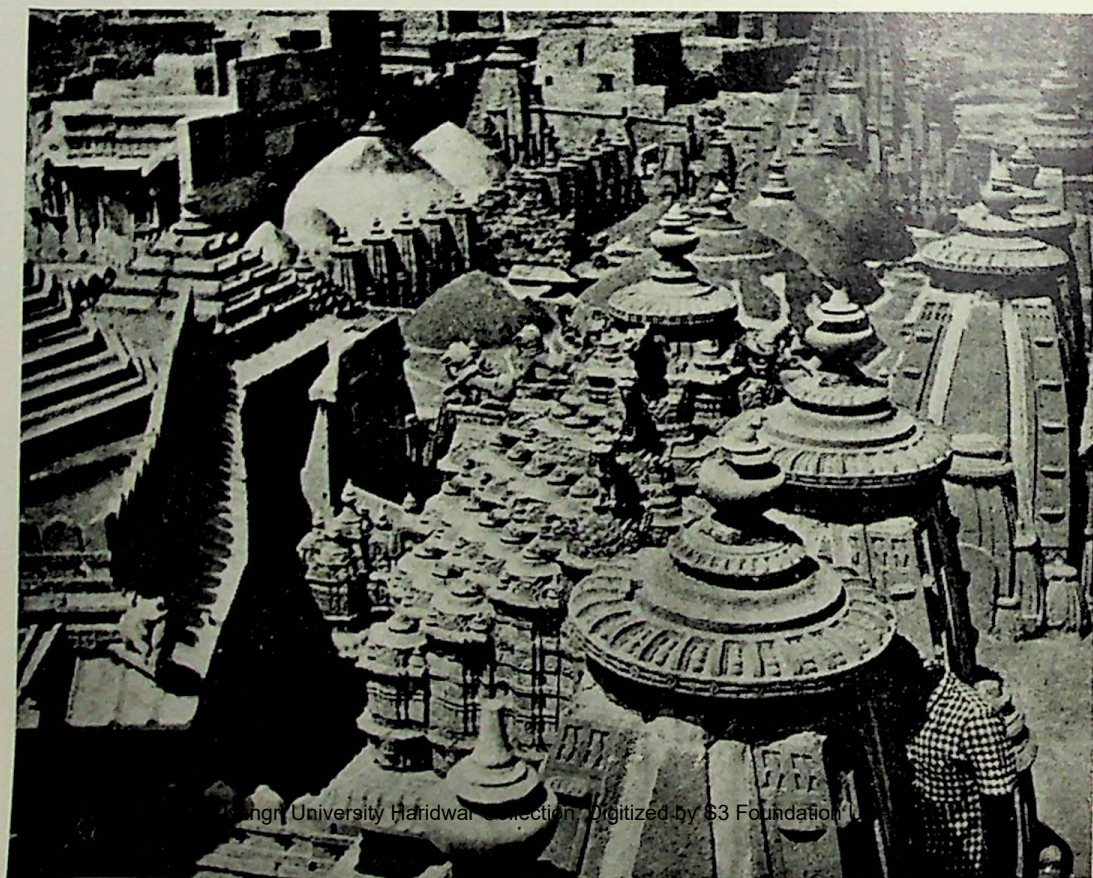
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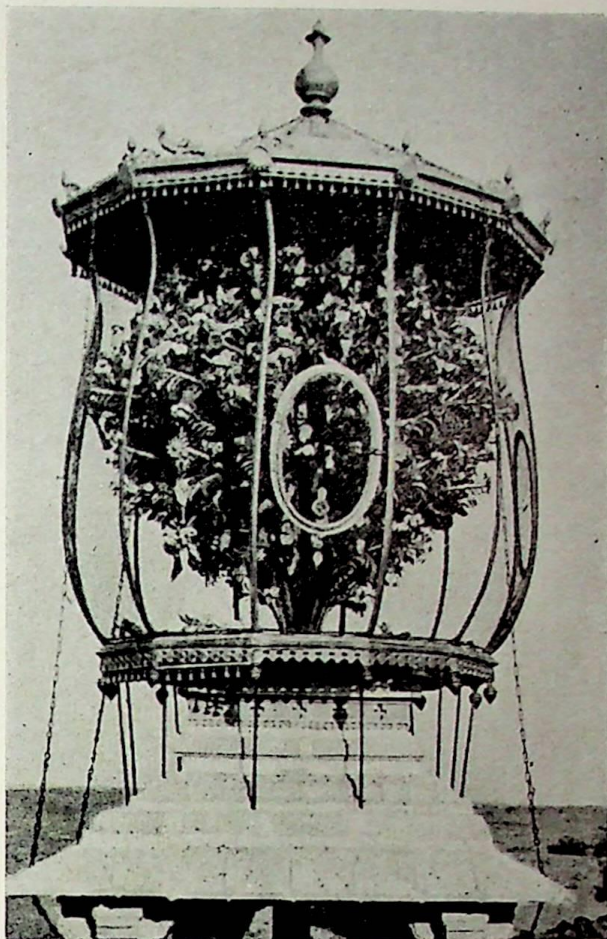
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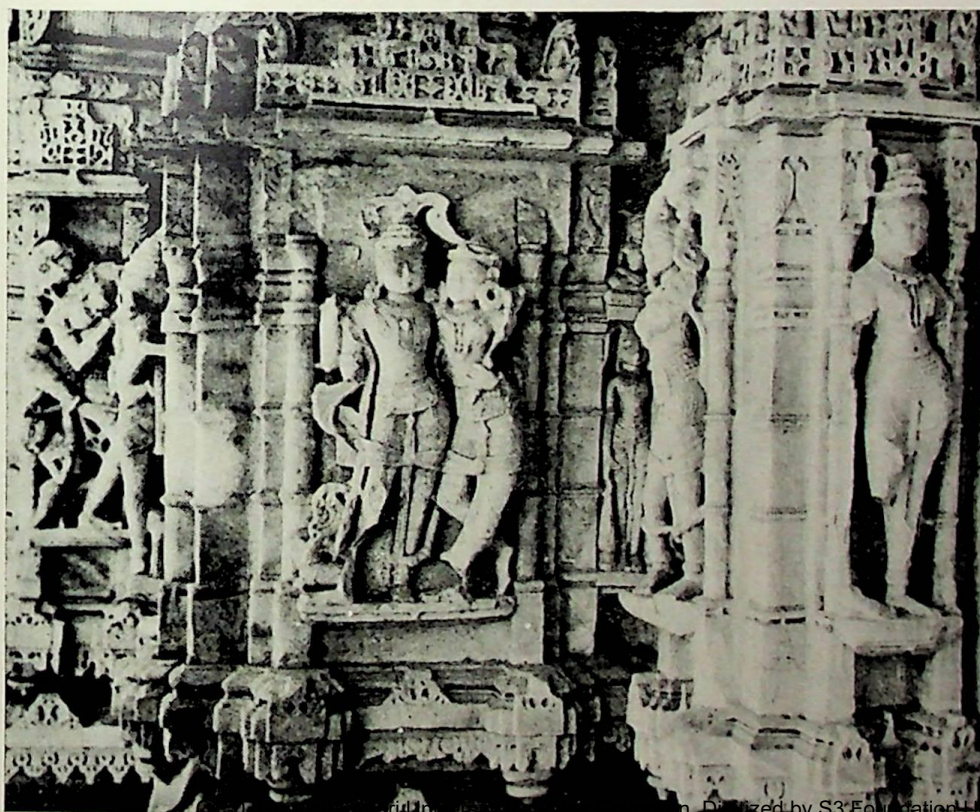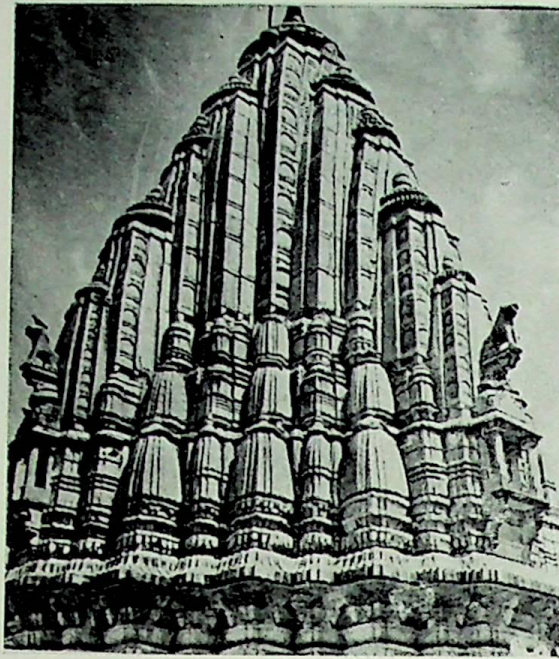
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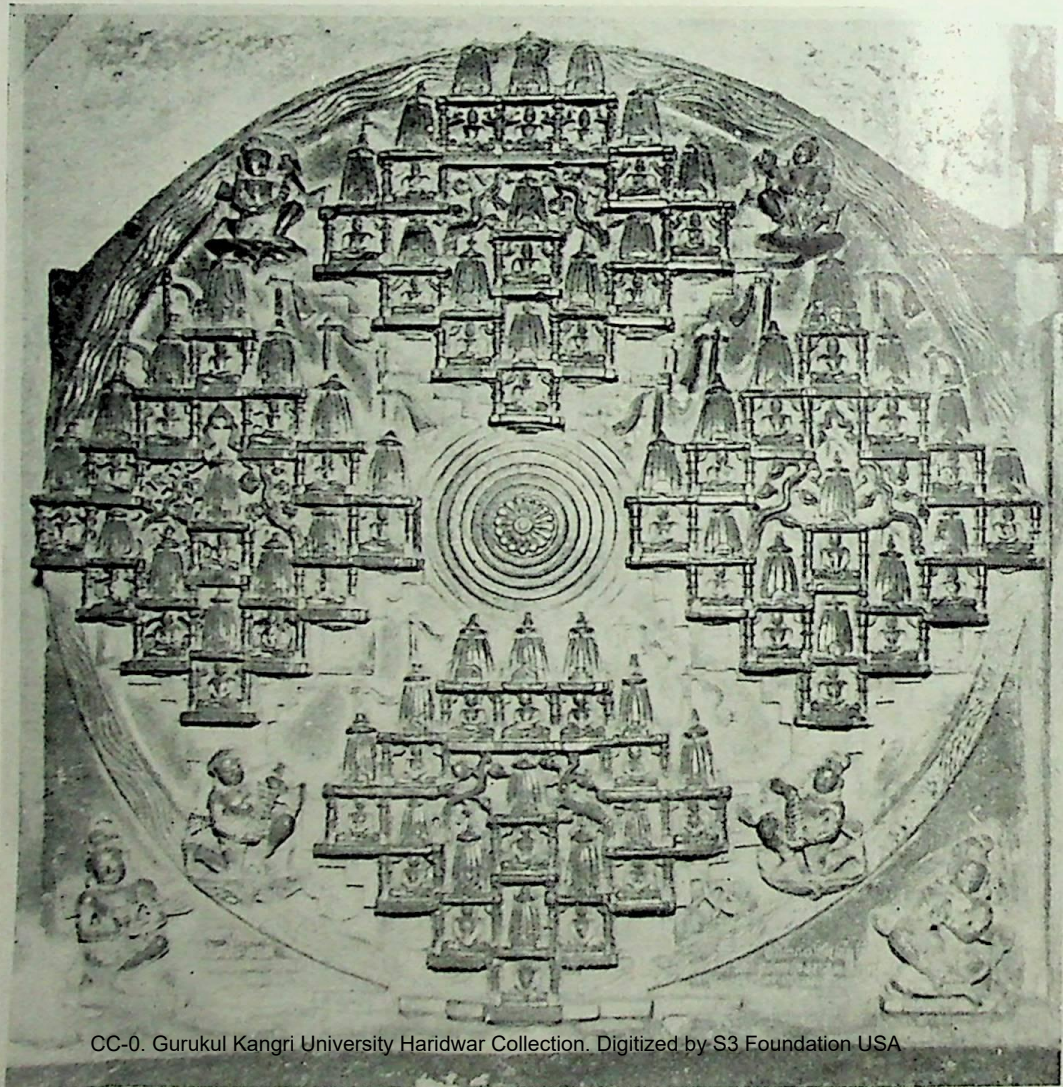
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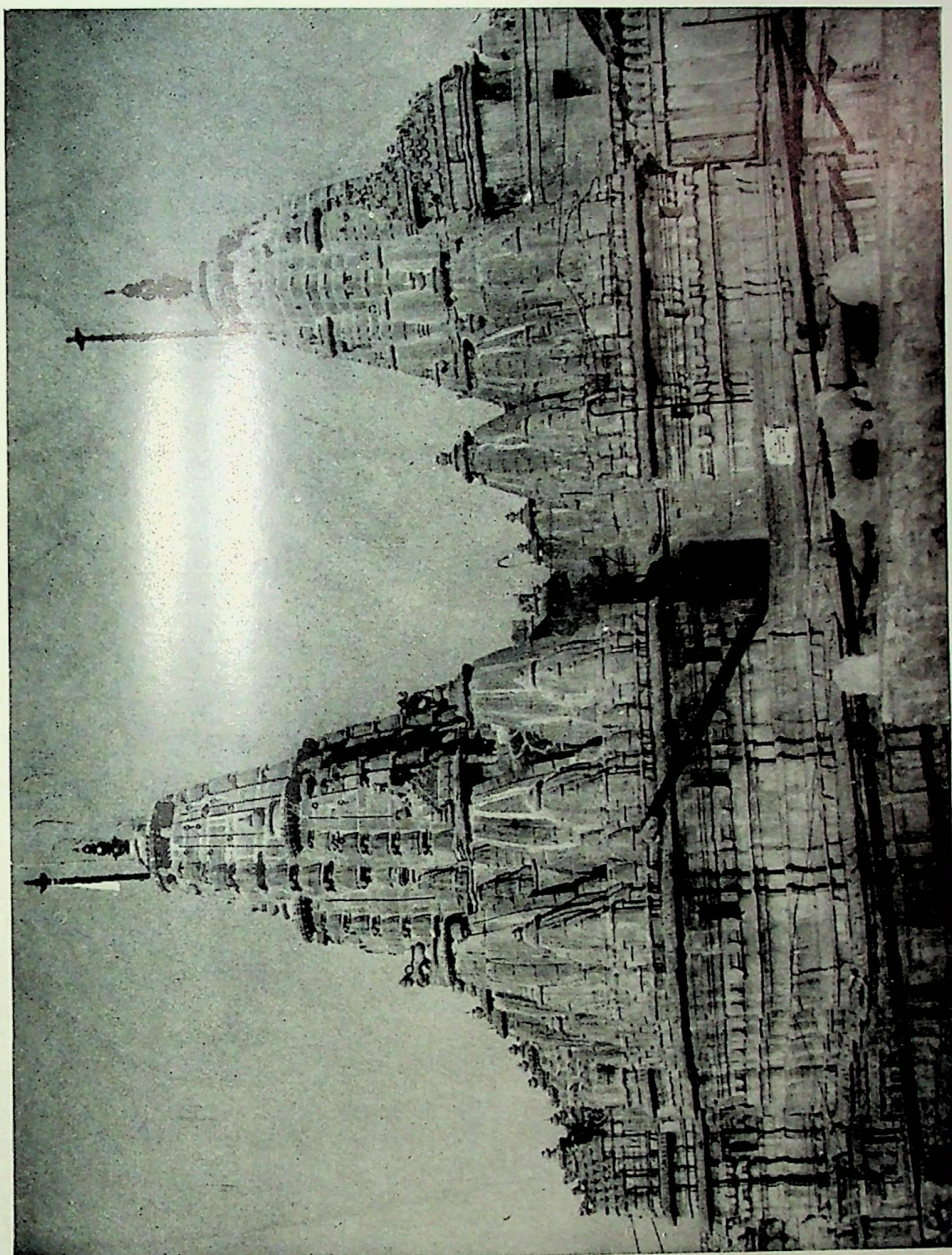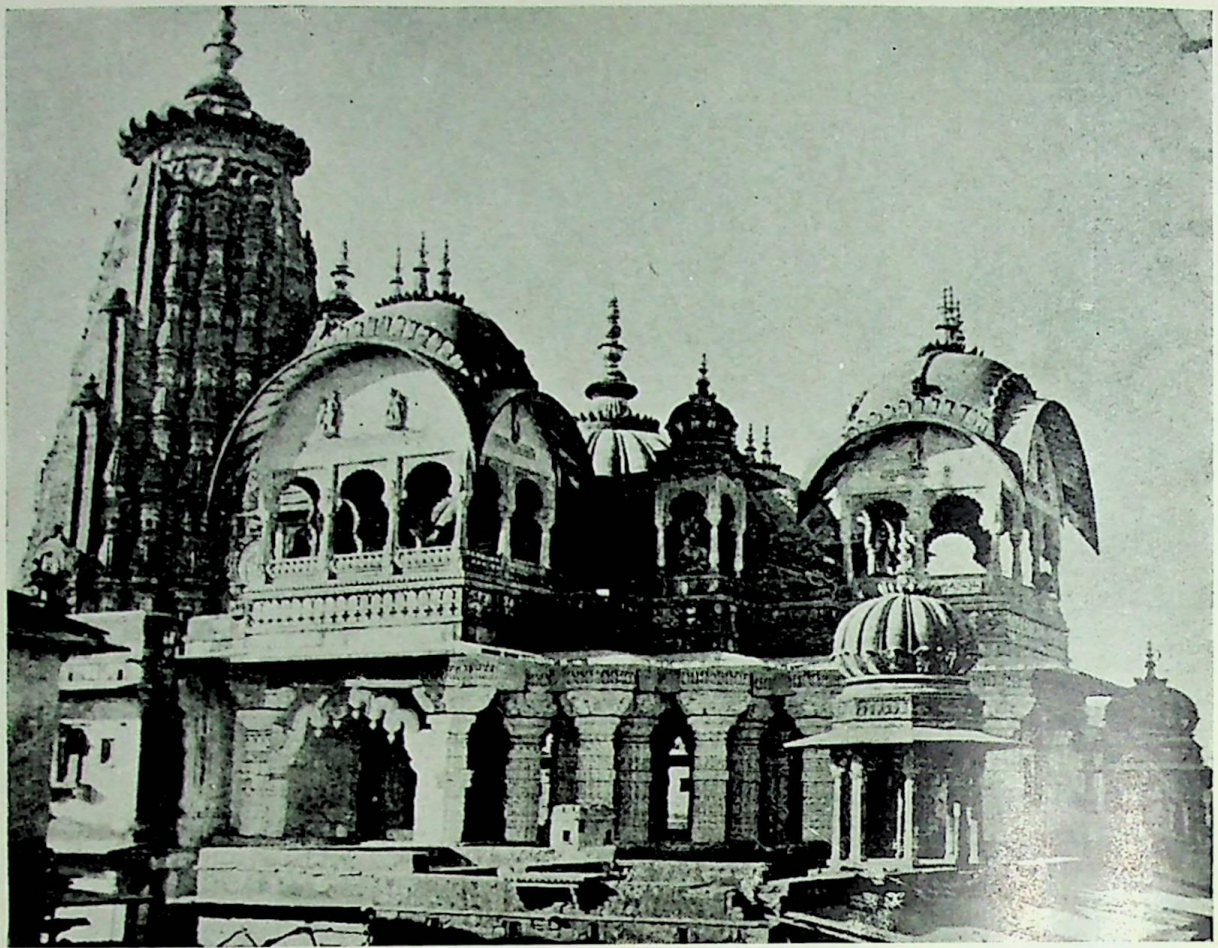
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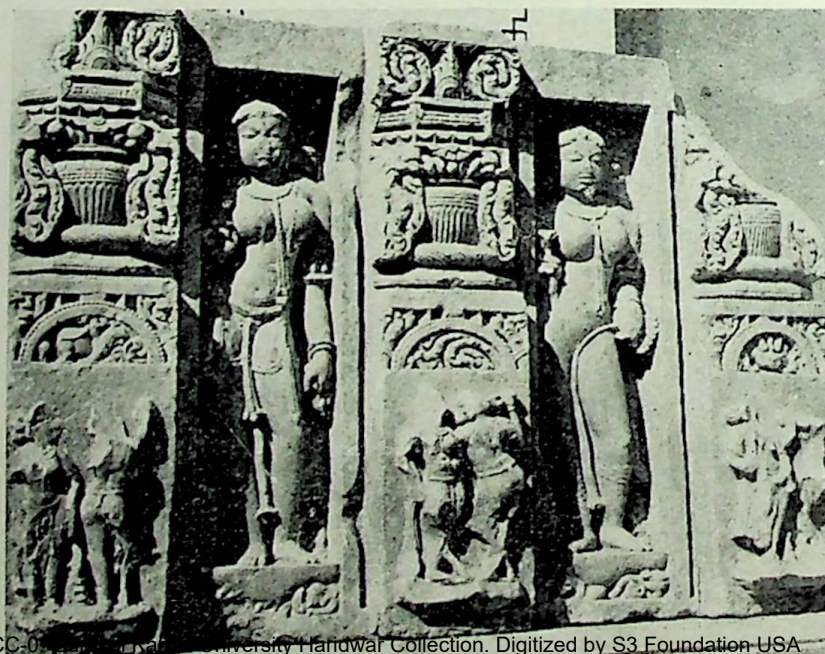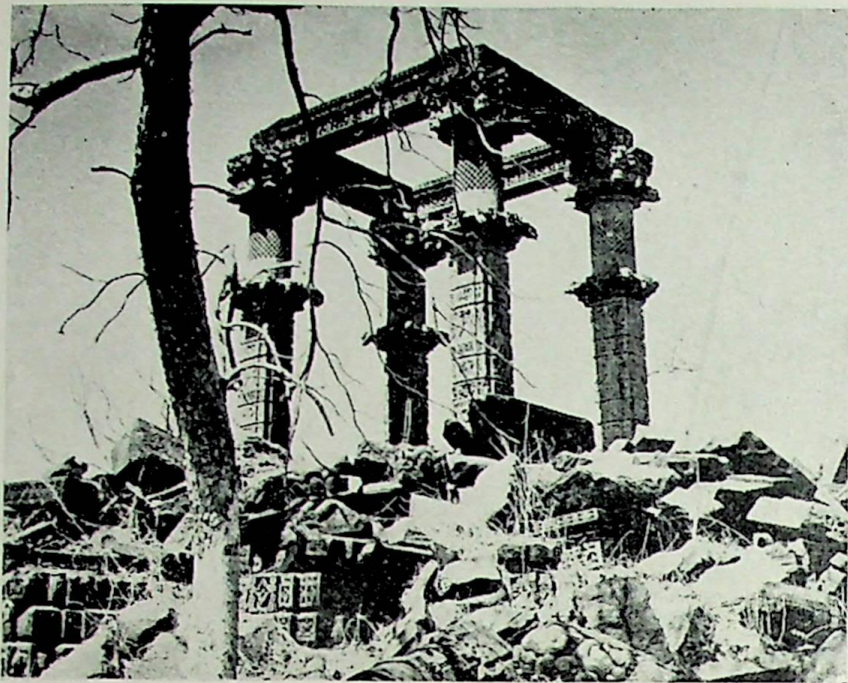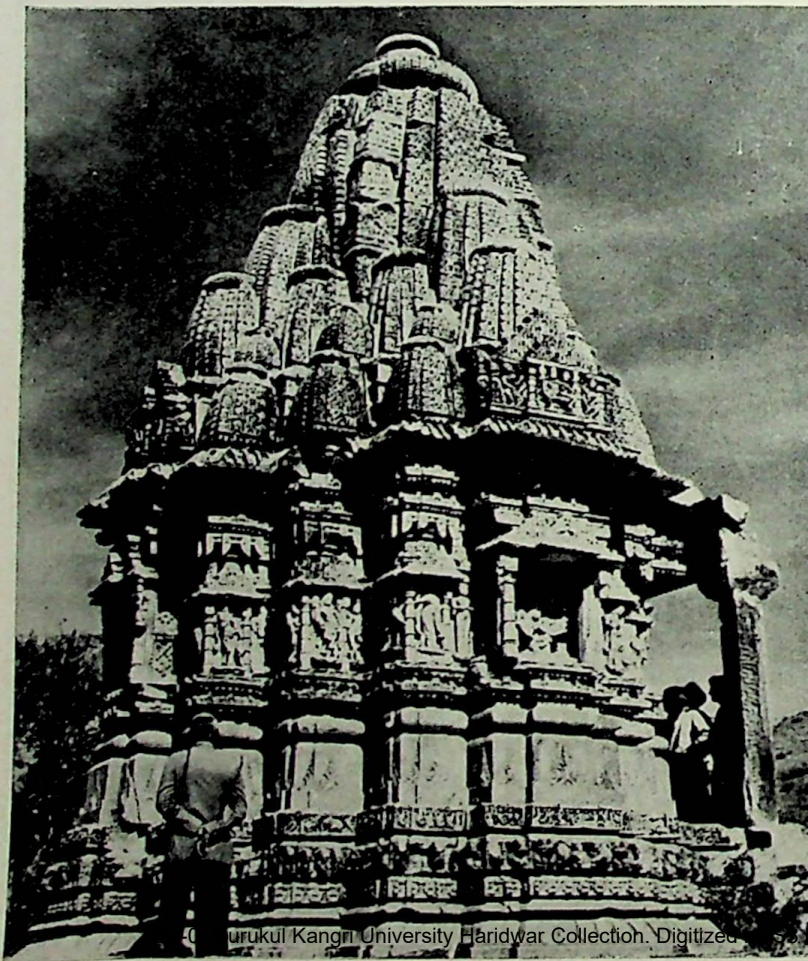
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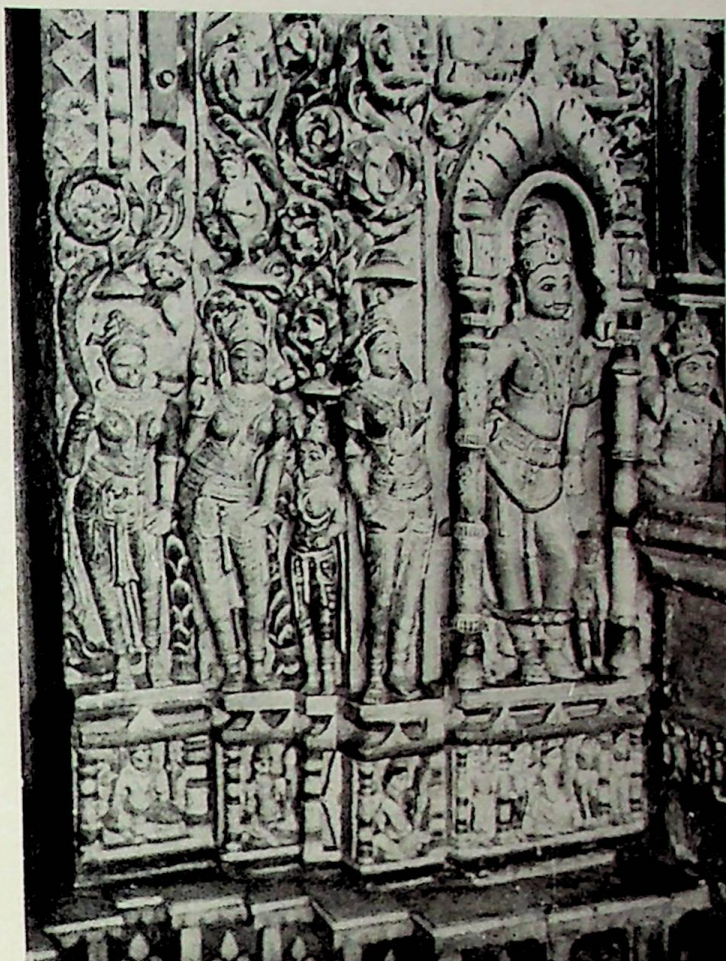
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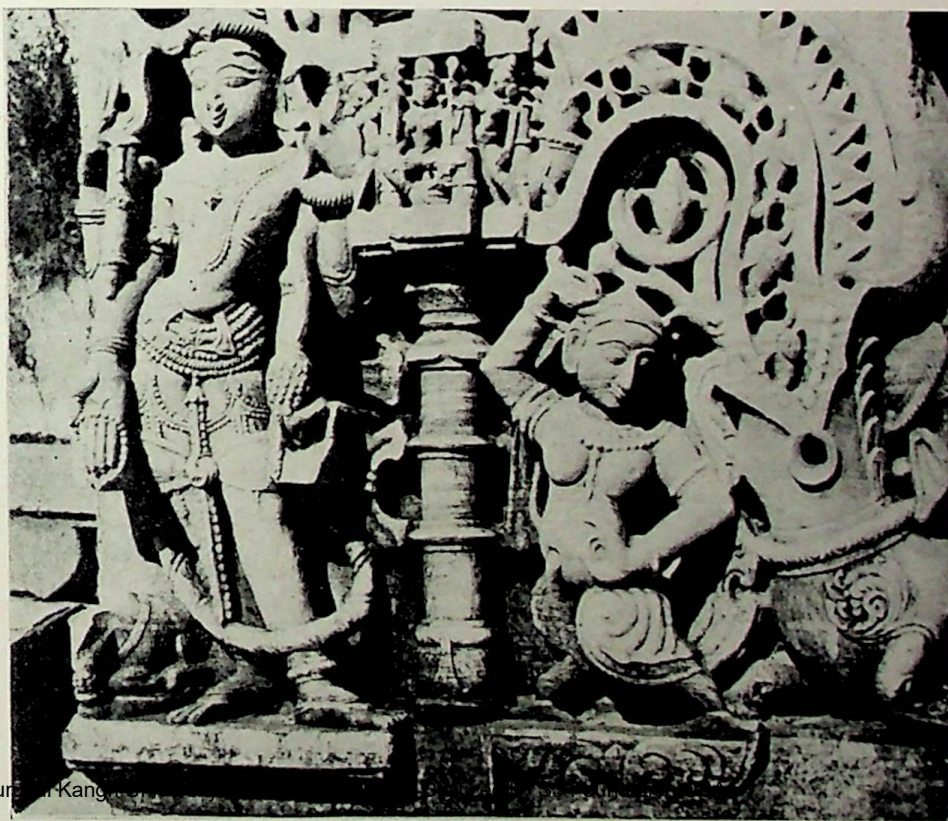
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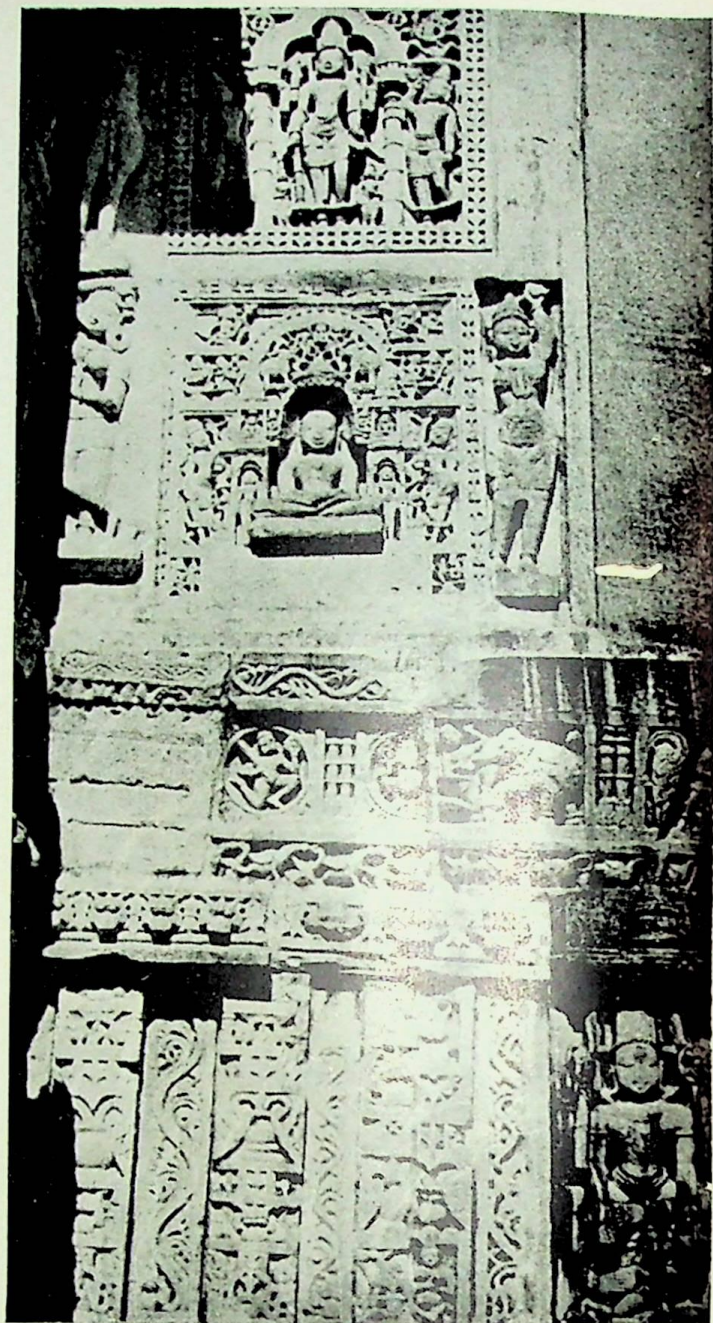
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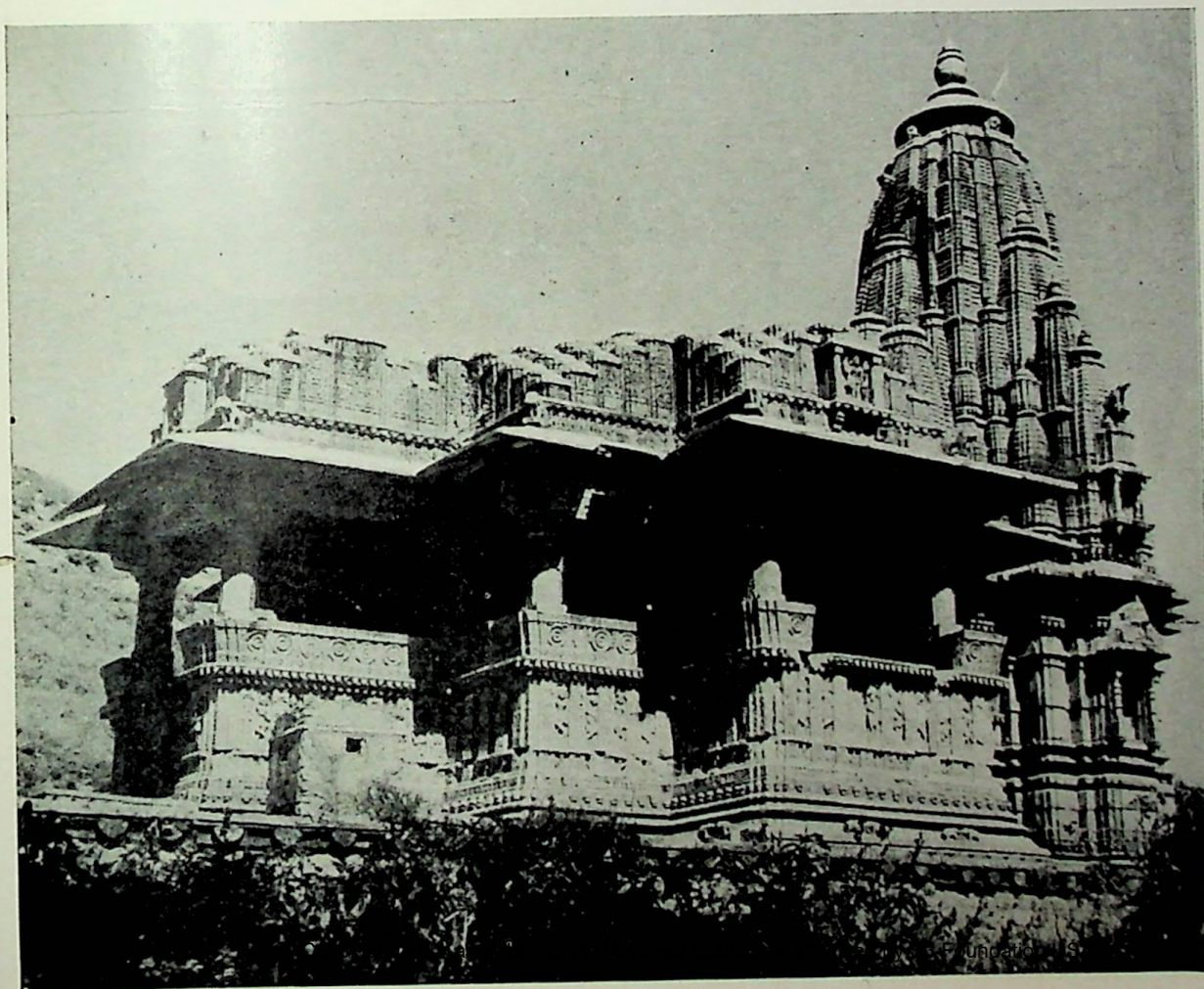
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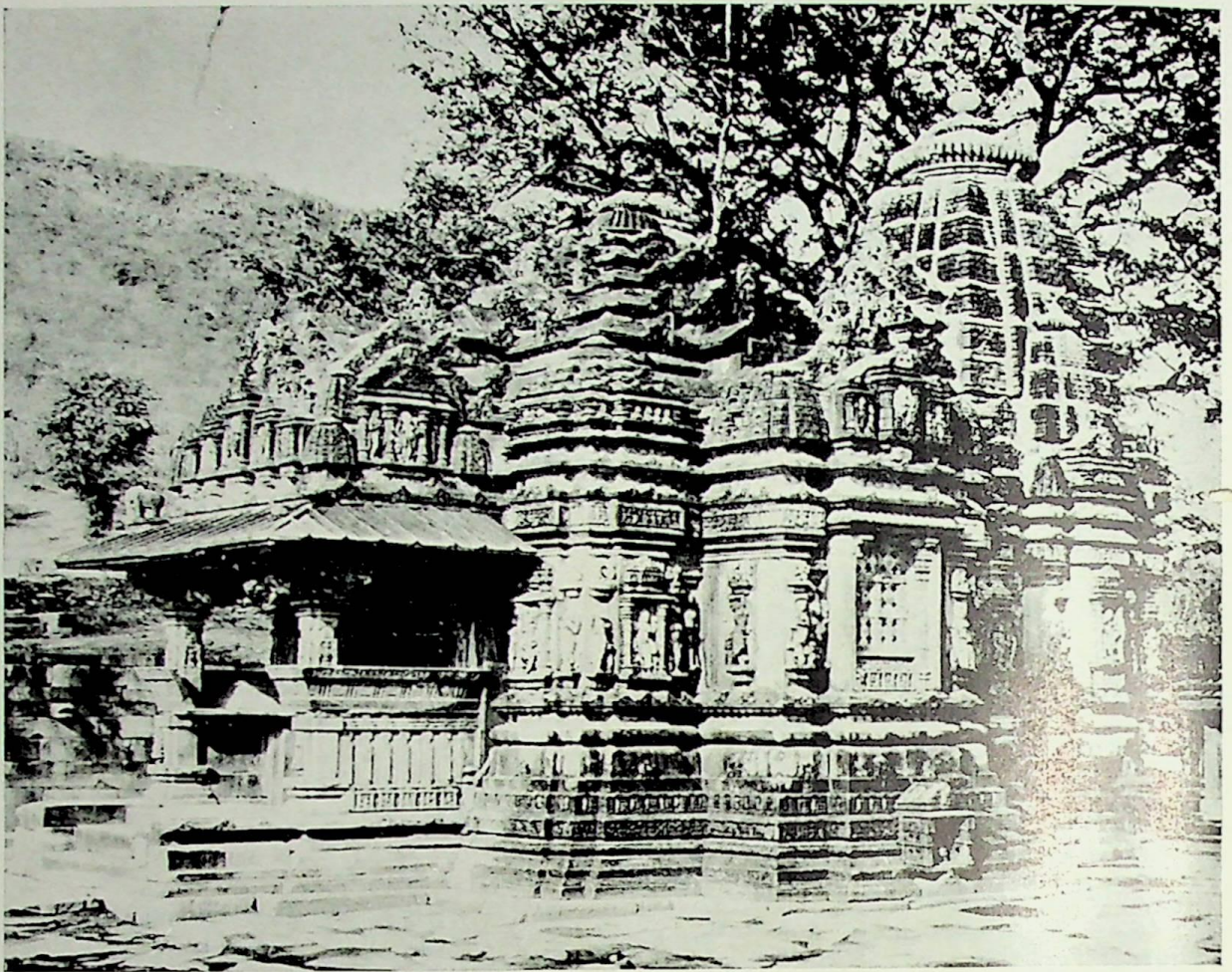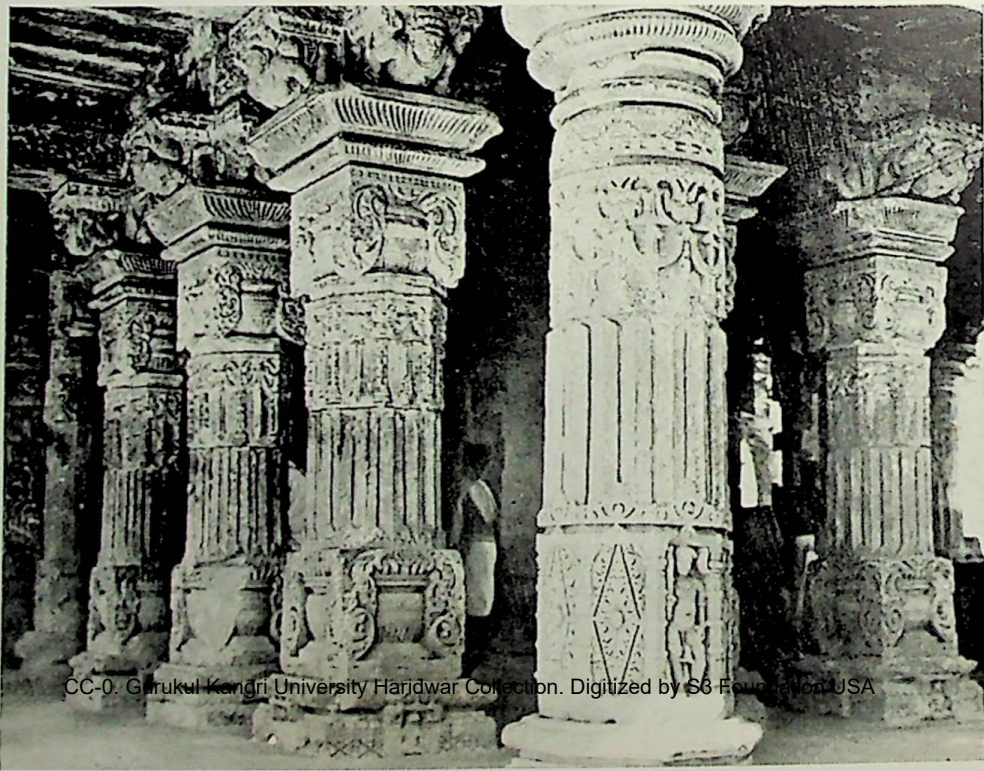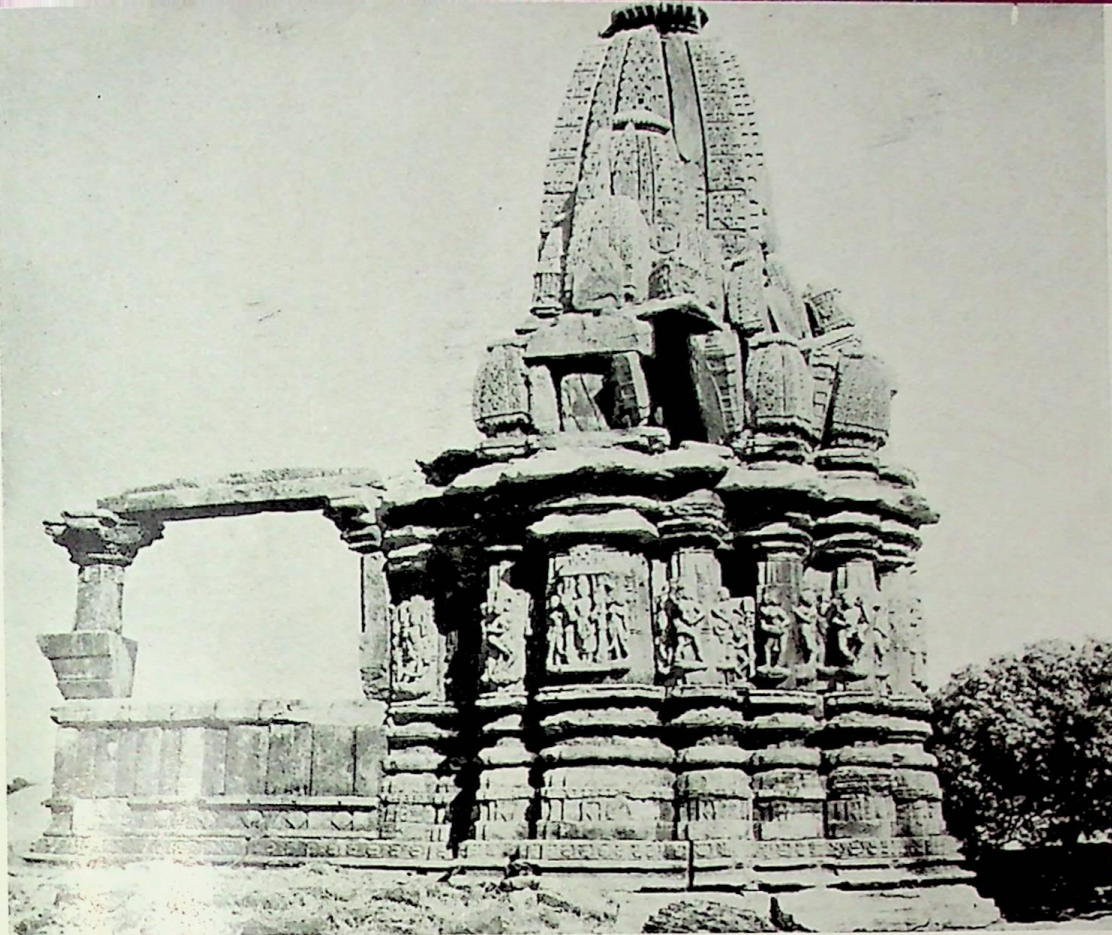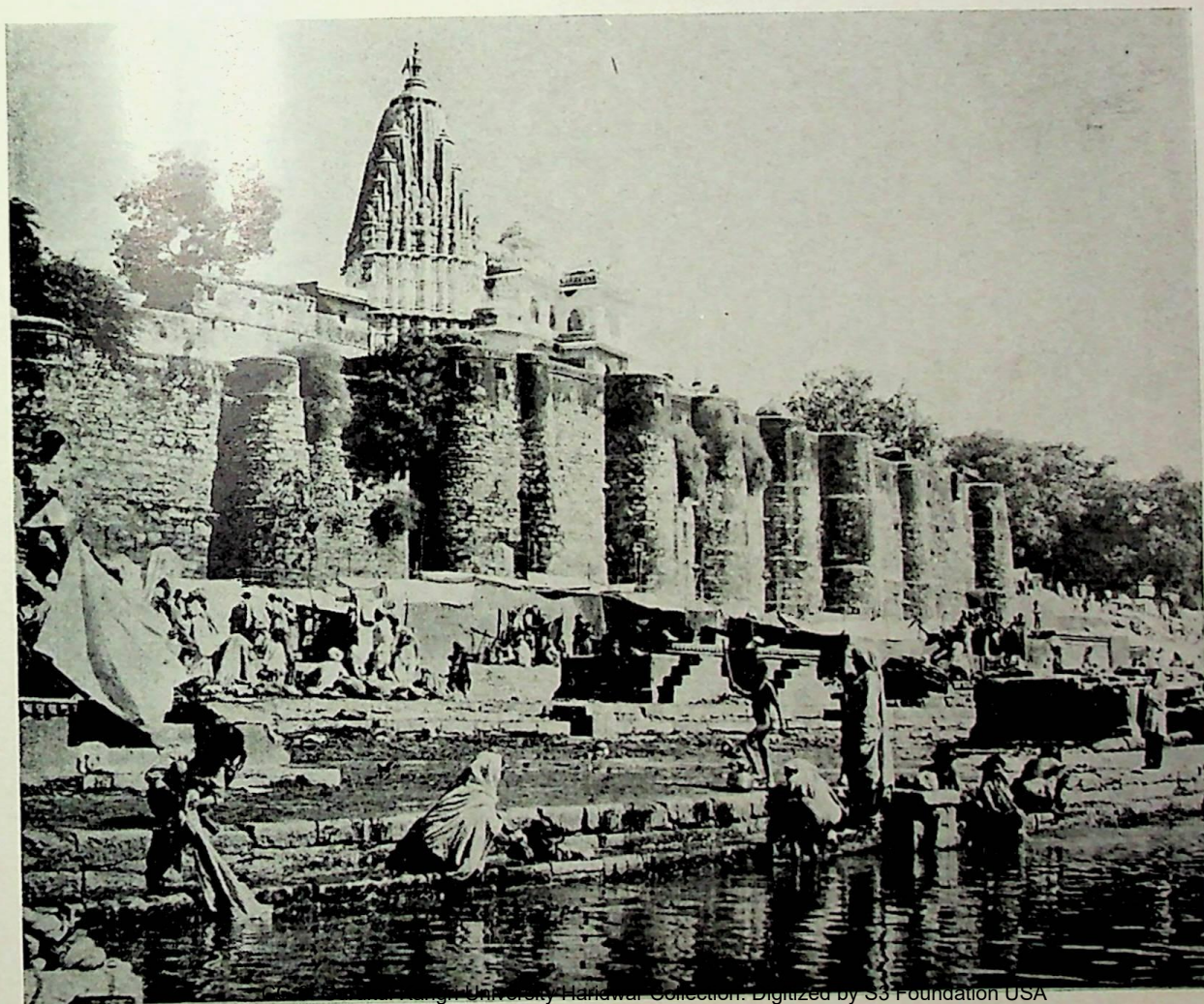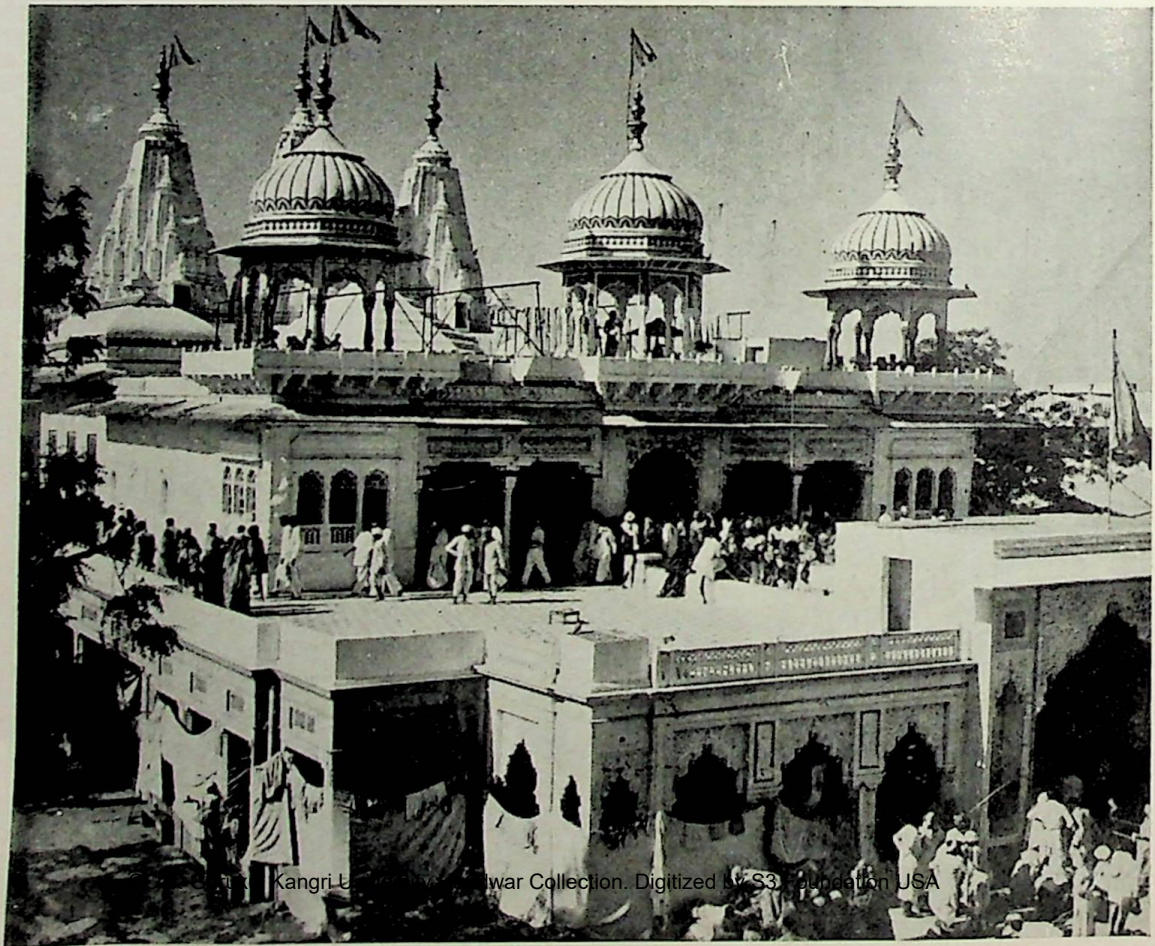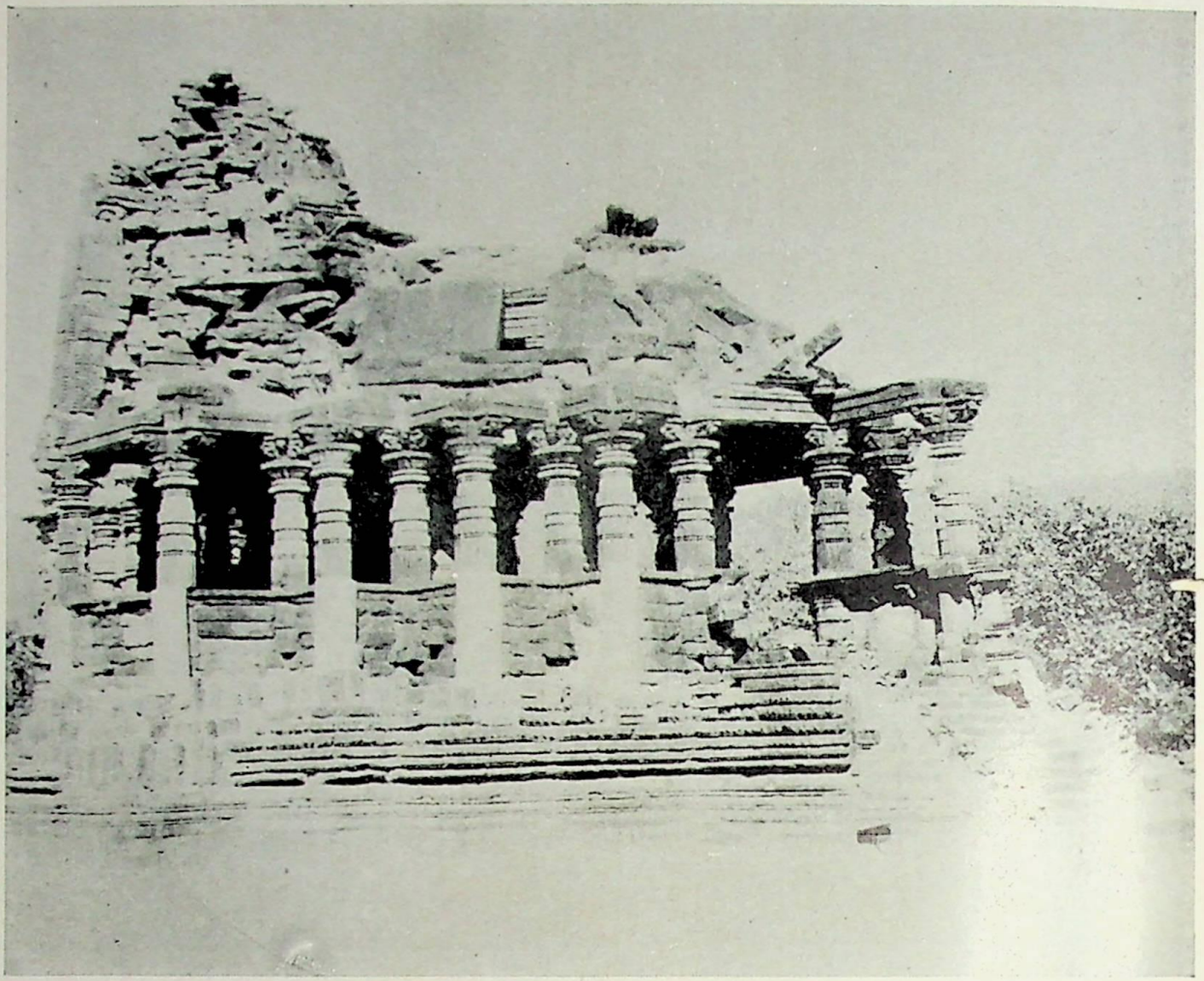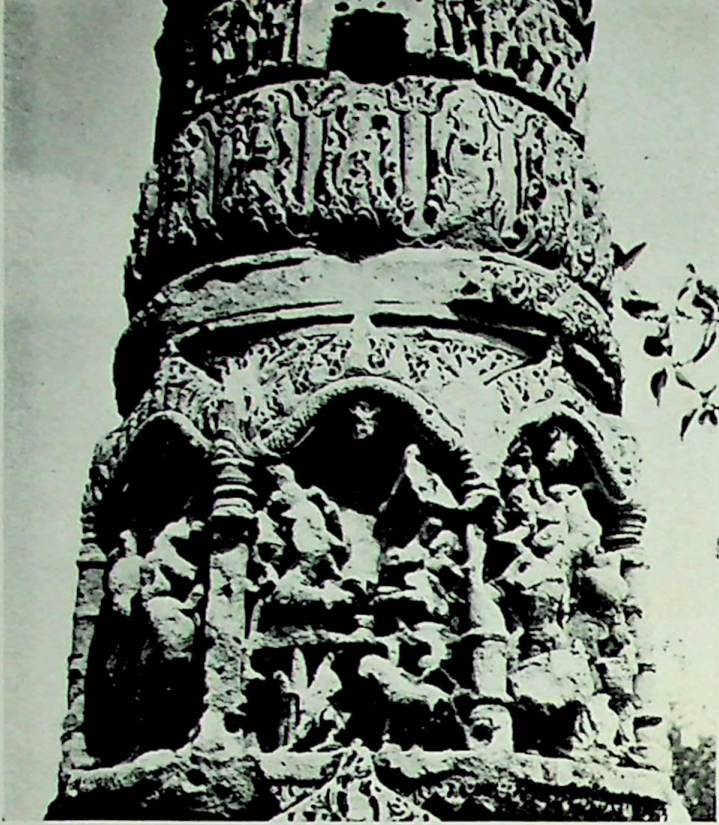
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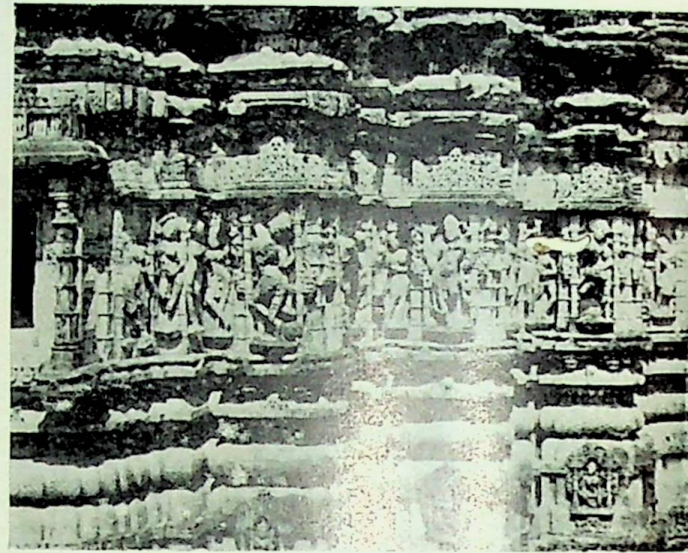
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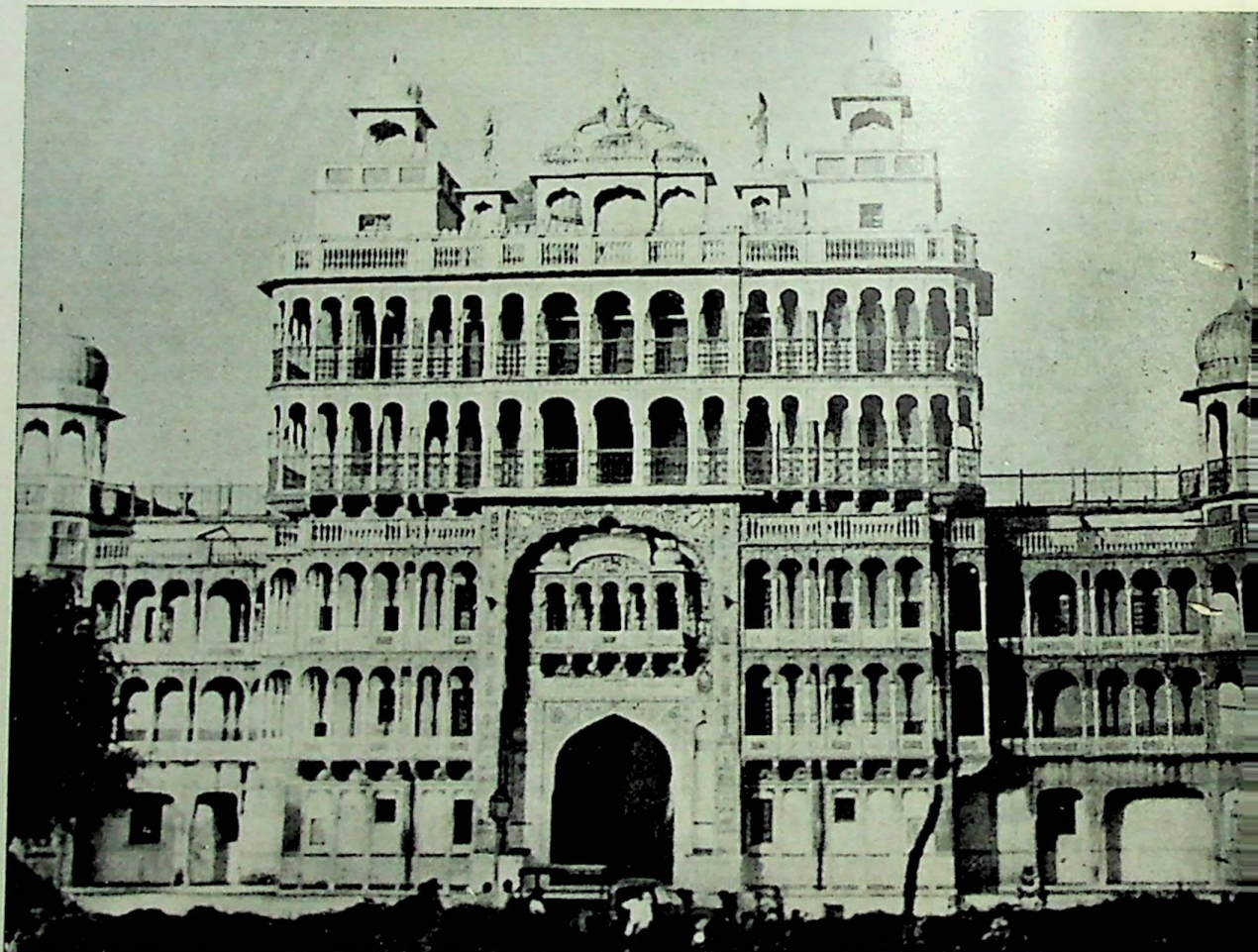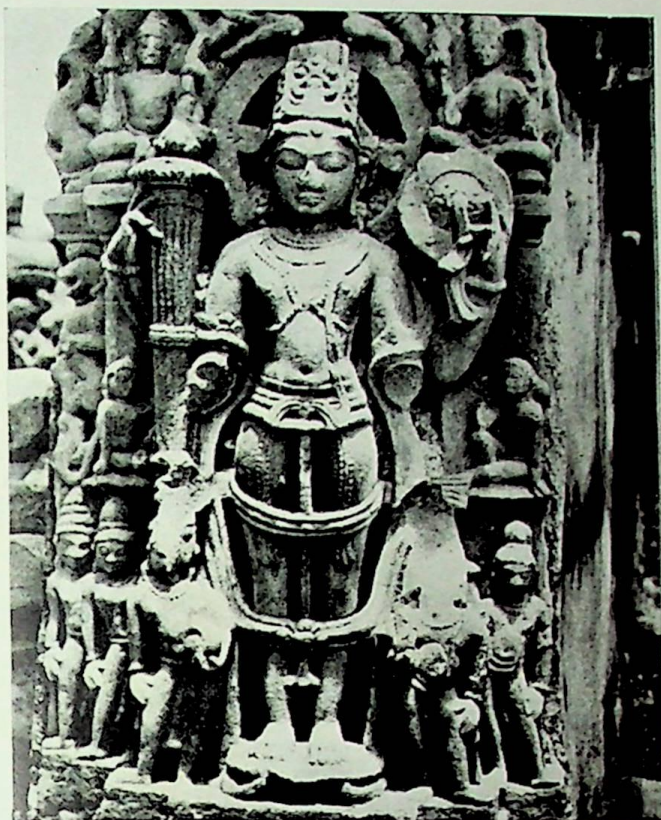
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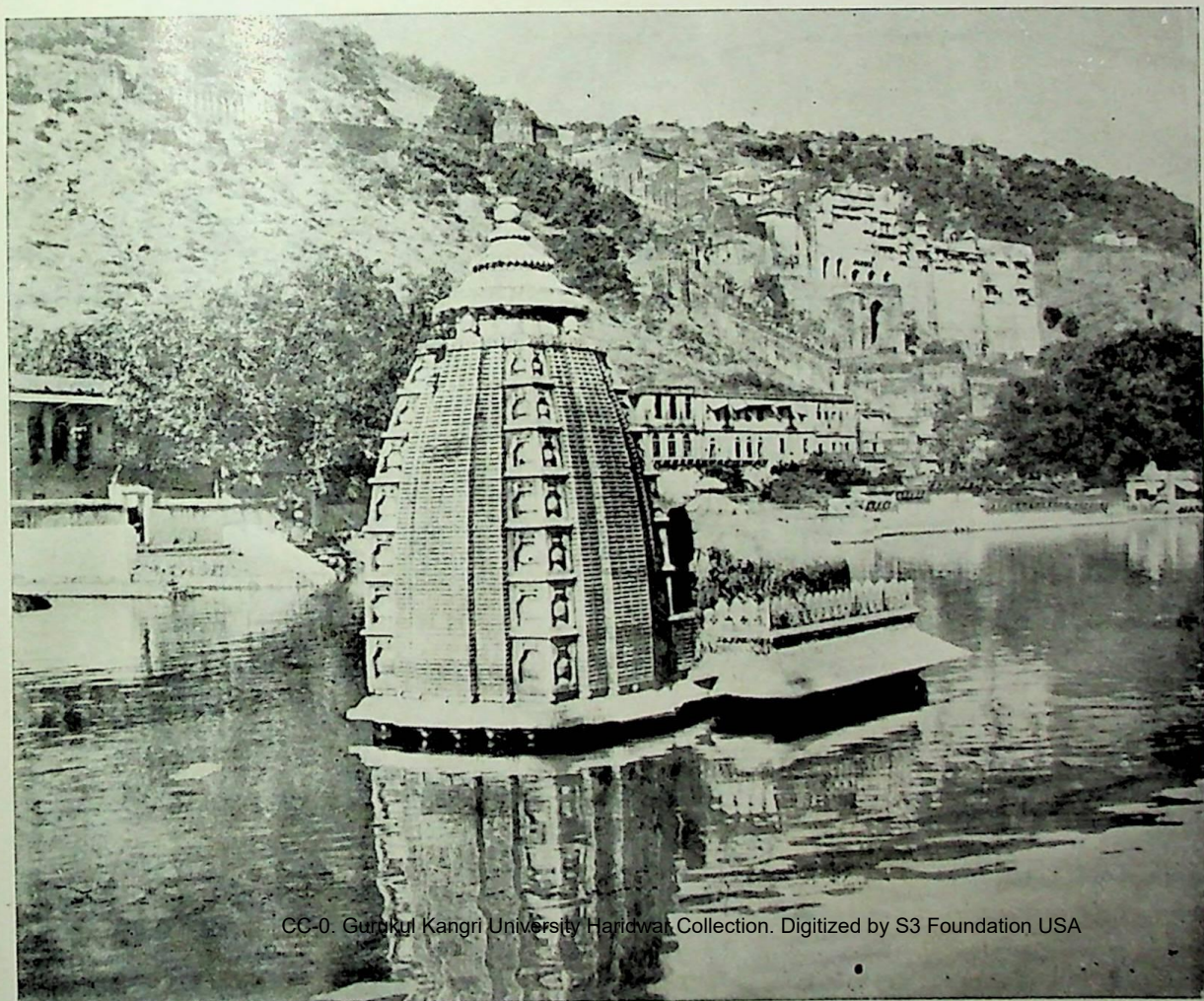
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GLOSSARY

AMALAK	—	Wheel shaped stone block.
ANTRALAYA	—	Vestibule
ANGI	—	An ornamental texture
APSARA	—	Damsel
ARDH	—	Half
ARDHMANDAPA	—	Portico or porch of a temple.
ASANA	—	Seat, posture
ASURA	—	Demon
AVTARA	—	Incarnation.
BATTI	—	Round Cake
BHOGA	—	Sensual enjoyment
CHAITNYA	—	Conscious
CHAUMUKHA	—	Four faced
DAMARU	—	A small drum with two faces and narrow in the middle
DARSHAN	—	Appearance
DEVDASI	—	Temple dansuese
DEVTA	—	Deity
DHAYAN	—	Meditation
DHAWAJA	—	An ensign
DIKSHA	—	Initiation
DVARPAL	—	Gaurd of the gate
GAJA	—	Elephant
GAJAMUKH	—	An epithet of the God Ganesh
GANA	—	An attendant
GARBAGRAHA	—	Sanctum
GOLOK	—	The abode or residence of Lord Krishna

GUMBAJ	—	Dome
HASTA	—	Hand
HASTISHALA	—	Elephant house
JAGAT	—	World
JAGMOHAN	—	Assembly Hall
JATA	—	Locks of hair
JAYESTHA	—	Elder
JHOOLA	—	Cradle
KALASH	—	A dome
KALI	—	The 'black', a terrific form of Lord Siva's Consort.
KALPA	—	Wish fulfilling celestial tree.
KANISHTA	—	Younger
KAULA	—	A tantric sect
KIRTIMUKHA	—	Ornamental mask
KRIDALILA	—	Love sport.
LINGA	—	Columnal emblem of Siva
MADANIKA	—	Nymph
MADHYA	—	Central
MAITHUN	—	Coupling
MAKARKUNDALA	—	Ornament of the ear
MANDAPA	—	Pillared Hall
MANDIR	—	Temple
MARUBHUMI	—	Place of desert
MATRIKA	—	The seven Goddesses of Tantrikas viz. Brahmi, Maheshwari, Kumari, Vaishanavi, Varahi, Indrani and Choumunda.
MERU	—	Mythological mountain
MRIDANGA	—	Drum
NAUGAJA	—	Nine yards

NAVGRAHA	—	Nine planets
NAYIKA	—	Heroine
NIDHI	—	Treasure
NIJMANDIR	—	Inner temple
NRITYA	—	Dance
PANCHMANDIR	—	Group of five temples
PUJA	—	Rituals
RISHI	—	Sage
SABHAMANDAPA	—	Assembly hall.
SADHAK	—	Devotee
SADHU	—	Saint
SHAKTI	—	Power
SHAYAN	—	Rest
SHILA	—	Rock
SHIKHARA	—	Steaple
SHIROMANI	—	Supreme
SHRINGAR	—	Embellishment
SILPAKAR	—	Artist
STHAPAK	—	Chief architect
STAMBH	—	Columns
STUPA	—	Dome
SURASUNDARI	—	Celestial nymph
SAWARUPAS	—	Forms
TAKSHAK	—	Sculptor
TAP	—	Religious austerity
TORANA	—	Arched gateway
TRIMURTI	—	Trinity—Brahma, Siva and Vishnu
URDHVA-MENDHRA	—	Penis erect
VAJRA	—	A weapon of Indra
VARAH	—	Boar incarnation of Vishnu.

VARANA — Caste
VARANDAH — Balcony
VASUDEVAKUTUMBKAM— World brotherhood

YOGA — Meditation

ZAROKHA — Balcony
ZHANKI — Glimpse

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